THE BOOK JOSHUA
Jan Beute

Joshua 1
‘Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord.’ v. 1
The opening words of this Book are that Moses died. The preceding Book, Deuteronomy, ended with Moses dying on Mount Nebo on the eastern side of the River Jordan. He was not privileged to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. The previous five Books, from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Deuteronomy, are accredited to Moses.
The Book of Joshua has a totally different make-up, and Moses plays no part in this as he died. We will quickly discover that Joshua has a different style of writing to Moses as he is challenged with a new generation. Only two people crossed both the Red Sea and the River Jordan, and they were Joshua and Caleb. Num. 14:30. In the Books of Moses, Joshua is esteemed as the leading warrior for Israel, and even as a young man he fought the Amalekites. Exod. 17:8–14
The Book of Joshua has countless truths relating to our dispensation, and that is in keeping with the New Testament. In the Greek language, the name Joshua and the name Jesus are exactly the same. Joshua or Jehoshua means ‘Jehovah is salvation.’ Joshua’s own life experiences illustrate that time and again. The Apostle Paul reminds us that the complete history of Israel is an example to all of us. ‘Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction’ 1 Cor. 10:11
The Old Testament has a historic import, but the real impact for writing them is that they do have a message that could be projected to our dispensation. Via the Old Testament, God substantiates the truths that are found in the New Testament.
In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus distanced himself many times from the teachings of Moses. There was a frequent antagonism between the two. The great dissimilarities are emphasized by John: ‘For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ’ John 1:17
The Law of Moses and the grace of our Lord are poles apart and together they cannot subsist. We will find that the position Joshua had with respect to the nation of Israel is very similar to the position Christ has today with the Church. Our Lord died on the cross and presently we communicate with a resurrected Christ, and God is speaking through Him: ‘He has in these last days spoken to us’ Heb. 1:2 Whilst Moses was alive he hindered Joshua from claiming the land of Canaan. It is not kind to speak of Moses in that manner, but the real meaning of his death is locked away in typology.
Our promised inheritance is not accessible if the Laws of Moses do grip our lives. Moses epitomised the law but when our Lord was on earth, His words were full of grace. He frequently said: ‘This is what the Law of Moses says, but I say…. ’
The new covenant can only surface once the old covenant is made redundant. It clearly says that our inheritance is not via the laws of Moses but through the righteousness or via the operation of both faith and grace.

We partake in the promises of Abraham, and it circumvents the promises once made to Moses. Many times it says that our inheritance is accessible to all, since Christ made an end to the law by His death on the cross. God once promised Abraham that he would inherit the land, and our inheritance is invested in the promise He once made to Abraham. We will inherit the land of Canaan, but our promises are far greater than Joshua's. We are now partakers of the heavenly Canaan, Heb. 12:22, and it surpasses any promise that is made with regard to this world. In the near future when Israel repents on the day of the Lord, Israel will have the freedom and the power to oust their enemies and to claim the present land of Zion.

The law or Moses restricted any to secure the new covenant, as its prime task was to lead us to Christ. Once we accept Him through faith we are free to claim our inheritance. 'Therefore the law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.' Gal. 3:24, 25

In the tabernacle, this truth is well explained when the high priest did service once a year on the great Day of Atonement. On that day, he was not allowed to do his usual daily service in the sanctuary but only in the inner sanctuary. The sanctuary portrays the old covenant, and it was forbidden on the Great Day of Atonement when he did service in the inner sanctuary, portraying the truths concerning the new covenant. Heb. 9:8. Any believer today can harvest the benefit of this great day while awaiting His return. Today any other service within the sanctuary is pointless. His death is the end of the law, Rom. 10:4, and this includes all the religious ceremonies in the sanctuary.

Since Christ's resurrection, we can confidently follow Him into the heavens and do service in the inner sanctuary. The life of Joshua resembles our Lord in many ways. Joshua had to wait for 3 days before crossing the River Jordan, and similarly our Lord rose on the 3rd day.

The new covenant cannot exist under the restrictive umbrella of the old, which was done away with on the 3rd day. In Romans 7 Paul argues that since Christ died to the law, we can now enjoy a relationship with the 'One' who rose from the dead. Paul used to be jealous of the law and that jealousy triggered him to persecute the Church. Phil. 3:6.

Whatever he accomplished as part of the law he deemed as a loss. Since his conversion, the Apostle Paul sees himself as dead to the law and his ambitions are nurtured by the promises locked away in Christ. We, as Paul, can claim the blessing of the new covenant, but that will trigger a battle with Satan.

When Joshua stood on the other side of the River Jordan to claim the land of Canaan, he realised that his enemies (the 31 kings) were cautiously watching his every move. The Lord did not chase Israel's enemies out from the land of Canaan, as Joshua had to learn how to deal with them. Similarly today our enemy is still with us, but they will not prevail over us. Once we accept Christ they will become more evident and especially when we claim our promises. Moses once sent 10 men to explore the land of Canaan and only 2 believed that they were able to claim it. We need to be

like Joshua, who believed even while having all odds against him.
Unlike Moses, we can cross the River Jordan and claim our promises, triumphing over the evil forces or Satan in heaven. Symbolically to cross the River Jordan is to place the law behind us, and that will guarantee a skirmish with Satan.
Sadly many Christians today hesitate at the river finding it too intimidating to cross it. That will stagnate their growth and hence they will be too incompetent to claim their inheritance. They merely wish to cross the river once they die. This is in accord with a well-known song:
'Roll Jordan roll! Oh! I want to go to heaven when I die'.
This song is written seeing things from an earthly perspective, and surely that will sadden our spirit. Our calling is far greater, as we can claim the heaven, and we have the means to enter it. Eph. 1:3; 2:6.
Our battle in Ephesians 6 is not on earth, but it is against the principalities in heaven. It is not against flesh and blood, but rather we wrestle with the evil forces in heaven. We need our weaponry to oppose the onslaughts of Satan, to focus on things above and not bargain on our earthly goods. Col. 3:1.
We can claim our victory as we have conquered the greatest enemy namely death. Presently Christ is completing His work within us, even though we are on earth. We need to forget the things that are behind us and similarly our perilous journey through the desert; we need to chase the things that are promised to us. If we constantly look behind us, it will surely encumber us. Lot's wife looked behind her as she longed for the things she had. She is still standing.
We are blessed with every spiritual blessing in heaven since we are totally part of Christ. Eph. 1:3. We need to follow Him as Israel used to follow Joshua.
As Israel was blessed with the blessing of Joshua, equally we are blessed and share every blessing with Christ in heaven.
Right now God wants to finish His work within us, and not after our death or with the rapture. The work of Christ within our mortal bodies will be to His glory, but once after the rapture, we will be clothed with immortality. Then our works will not have the same importance as before. Paul realised this, and it made him even more eager to run the race. The Apostle Paul knew with his death, the race would end. Joshua spurred the people to be strong that they may enter the land. The encouraging words of Joshua 1:3–9 are the Words of the Lord Jesus calling us to battle, and it will also be the words of all Israel when they claim the land of Canaan during the great tribulation. Once Israel repent after the rapture, Christ will battle for Israel, and they will invade the land.
'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee …the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.' Isa. 60:1, 2
This is one of the most frequently quoted verses in the New Testament with the words: arise, shine, light and the glory of Christ. The most obvious enemy we have as the children of light is the darkness. If we are clothed with Christ then we are more than conquerors and can confidently deflect Satan's attacks.

A few verses prior to this well-known passage in Isaiah 60, we read how the Lord Himself was clothed when He was confronted by Satan. ‘For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing’ Isa. 59:17 Christ had the same weaponry as in Ephesians 6. The three times the weaponry is cited in the New Testament it refers to Isaiah 59 and 60. If we continue in the darkness and live in the ‘flesh,’ Satan will not be bothered by us, but once we step into the light he will notice us. The world ‘those who are living in darkness’ is oblivious of our battle. Satan cannot undo the bond we have in Christ, but he strives to make us useless for Him. The proof that Satan is working today is realised in the lives of many Christians who desire to follow Christ. Their own life experiences are weighed down with one hindrance after the other. Joshua told the people that he would bring them into the rest, Josh. 1:13, but Paul says in Hebrews 3 and 4 that the children of Israel did not enter the rest.

Joshua and David thought they entered the rest, but it is not the rest God had in mind. The real Joshua or David will take them there via the promises of the new covenant. The experiences Israel had under the leadership of Joshua and David implicated truths that can only be mastered during our dispensation.

Joshua spoke to the people of Reuben, Gad, and a part of Manasseh, as they claimed the land east of the River Jordan. The land was promised to them by Moses since it was suitable for their many cattle. They must have thought that if God gave them the land east of the River Jordan, they would not be encumbered with the battle on the western side of the River Jordan, e. g. at Jericho and Ai. Moses in Numbers 32:16–21 promised the land to them, but it had an edict.

If they wanted the land, their men had to be the foremost warriors in any future combat with the enemies. They were on the frontline and the shield for any battle. Their wives and children were allowed to remain in the land east of the River Jordan, but not their soldiers. Thinking they were immune to all the battles in the land of Canaan only proved wrong as they went into the ‘heart’ of every battle. 38 years prior to this history, Israel was stubborn refusing to enter the Promised Land.

The Lord was furious, and He delayed their entry. Now similarly the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and a part of Manasseh were also hesitant to enter the land but the Lord had a clause.

Reuben was the natural firstborn of Jacob and the son of Leah. Gen. 29. Gad was the firstborn of the maidservant of Leah namely Zilpah. Manasseh was the first son of Joseph his firstborn, but the real firstborn was not the first but the second namely Ephraim. Jacob blessed Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. Gen. 48:20.

Joseph is not mentioned here, but rather Manasseh, who is the natural firstborn of Joseph. Reuben, Gad and Manasseh being the natural firstborn will not inherit. This is unlike Ephraim who as the real firstborn will not be involved with the main battlefront. From previous history, we are aware that Reuben (who was Jacob’s first child) was not the firstborn but rather Joseph or Ephraim, and Gad too did not come into contention.

The natural firstborn will not inherit the land to the west of the River

Jordan. The flesh which is the first on earth will not inherit, unlike the spirit that will inherit. The reason is that the ‘first’ is from the earth, and it will never prosper.
The Apostle Paul made it clear that there is a natural and a spiritual body. The natural body was first, but it was followed by the spiritual body. The earthly body will perish, and it will not inherit, unlike the spiritual body (the real firstborn). ‘And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living soul. ” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.’ 1 Cor. 15:45
Initially, we need to deal with the natural and then the spiritual. The first man was taken from the earth, and he is made from dust. In contrast, the second Man is the Lord from heaven. Figuratively speaking the history of the 3 tribes is not difficult to grasp as they speak of the ‘natural man’ from the earth. 1 Corinthians 15 is a long chapter ending with the rapture but the real thrust of the message is the following verse:
‘Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.’ 1 Cor. 15:50
Paul wrote this verse to carnally minded people. He was troubled by them as he was aware that they forfeited their heavenly calling, not reaping what they should. We will not condemn any individual if they are prominent, but God does. They set their mind on the flesh, and that is death. Rom. 8:6. In 1 Corinthians 2 Paul continually compares the worldly wisdom with the wisdom Christ has given us.
It is important to stress that our life on earth has great importance, and that our walk on earth will depend if we do inherit once we meet Christ face to face. Filling our minds with carnal things will spoil our inheritance or the credit we will receive from the Lord. Being part of Christ, we will inherit the kingdom, Rom. 8:17, 29, and besides we will be regarded as the real firstborn.
We do not need to nurture our ‘flesh and blood’ as it will never inherit. The norm of our world is totally different to ours, and it clashes out rightly with the norms God has in mind for us.
We are a new creation in Christ and He is Spirit, and to Him only we need to yield. In this long chapter Paul substantiates that our flesh and blood will not inherit. Our inheritance is invested in heaven, and we have no rights on earth. The climax of the complete 1st Book of Corinthians is that the perishable will be clothed with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality. Then death will be swallowed up in victory. That is the victory Christ gave us. 1 Cor. 15:57.
The essence of our victory is to be appointed as sons, but before this can materialise we need to be delivered from our bodies. Our bodies on earth can never inherit. Wrapping up the chapter it says, we need to be worthy of our great hope:
‘to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.’ 1 Cor. 15:58
We may dispute the need for the last two verses in this Book, as it does not concern the rapture. Paul specially wrote them to emphasise that we need to work towards our goal receiving our inheritance as ‘sons.’ Christians who do not walk after the Spirit and disregard their calling will be in heaven, but they will not inherit or be called his sons. Our battle is to

maintain our faith and in no way is our inheritance tied to this world or to our flesh and blood, even how noble it may seem. Flesh and blood will not inherit even though they are first! They convey the natural firstborn who was first on earth, but they will not succeed. Paul speaks of a 1st and a 2nd Adam, and he assured us that the 1st will not inherit but the 2nd will. This thought is proved time and again in the Book of Genesis. From an earthly stance, Esau should have inherited instead of Jacob, but God saw it from a different perspective. This strife is evident even today as the two main religions of the world do differ from this conflict.

Some may argue that the flesh has no real value when compared to the spirit, as Esau was relegated by Jacob. The flesh is important to us as it is our tool to glory. Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh were the natural firstborn of Jacob and did not inherit the land west of the River Jordan.

Howbeit they were given the task as ourselves today. They hoped to remain east of the River Jordan, but for a reason God wanted them to cross the river with the Israelites and do battle with the enemy. We read that Reuben, Gad and Manasseh were skilled in battle, and God gave them the responsibility to combat their enemy. Equally our flesh is also given a similar task.

Once the battle had ended they returned to the land east of the River Jordan, as the flesh (Reuben, Gad and Manasseh) will not inherit. We cannot disregard the value of our flesh. Our battle is spiritual, and we can enter heaven, but in training our flesh will receive all the blows. It is a spiritual battle but our flesh will be targeted. Our battle involves spiritual weaponry, but it needs to be manoeuvred by our flesh. It is not a pure spiritual matter, and our flesh is of the essence. If Christ wishes to accomplish something in our lives, it will be via our flesh that previously obeyed Satan. His Spirit is within our flesh, and our armour is efficient once we manage it. The weapons are spiritual, but the battle is via the flesh.

Paul argues that the only religion we have is to dedicate our body as a living sacrifice for this battle. Rom. 12:1, 2. The sword is meaningless if we do not handle it and the helmet is of no importance if we don’t wear it. God will give us the strength and endow our bodies with the necessary armoury. Paul sees our flesh as an earthly vessel made of clay that ought to be filled with the Spirit.

‘But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power of God may be visible in us.’ 2 Cor. 4:7

The clay is brittle, and it breaks easily. The real value of any earthen vessel is what is inside of it. If it remains empty it has no value, and it will be dashed to pieces like a useless potter’s vessel. Our life is futile if it is not filled with something special. Once the power of God is inside of us it gains value. If we are filled with the Word of God, the spring of living water will continually flow from our vessel. Isa. 58:11. We do age as we are brittle and made from the dust of the earth.

Many people feel despondent and moan that their lives are empty. That is true because the value of their life or any vessel is ‘what is inside of it?’ The answer is to fill their vessels with something meaningful. Our vessel will always remain useless, and it will break, but our life on earth will have

a real purpose if we allow Christ to dwell inside of it. Paul was scorned by many a believer as his lifestyle made no impact on the Corinthians who were carnally minded. They saw him as a person having no leadership qualities, and amongst them he was despised and dishonoured. 1 Cor. 4:10.
Paul was continually persecuted, and they rumoured God was not with him. The miracle of our lives is that we do not get disheartened as the world when they are persecuted.
‘We are persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed.’ 2 Cor. 4:9
Paul was ‘knocked off his feet’ ever so often but repeatedly he got up and kept going. Our support is to appreciate that the life of Christ is within our mortal bodies. It is like a jar of clay expected to break when thrown against a brick wall, but miraculously it does not break as the power of God is within our bodies. It will not splinter to pieces if we are bonded to Christ. Paul said he would only boast in his weakness, realising that when weak any support he has can only be attributed as coming from God. 2 Cor. 12:9. Neither did the Lord Jesus enjoy an easy life on earth and He continually went up the mountains to pray. He had to recapitulate the way He had to go. This strife made Him sweat drops of blood, being not of a physical nature or anguish, but rather it reflected His spiritual turmoil.
Many Christians tend to think that they need to be affluent in today’s society. That is wrong as brittle clay has no value. Paul says the outward man will perish, but the inward man will be renewed from day to day. The things we see will vanish, but the things that are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor. 4:16–18.
During our dispensation, millions of Christians died who remained faithful due to their belief. They treasured their eternal possession rather than trusting in durable goods. To rightfully claim anything on our earth is pointless as everything on earth is fleeting and perishable.
Reuben, Gad and Manasseh continued living on the east side of the River Jordan and did not inherit the ‘promised land’ on the west of the river. If we belong to Christ, we too are seen as ‘outside’ the camp bearing His reproach. ‘So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.’ Heb. 13:13
However, we are mere earthen vessels absorbing the impact of our daily battle. We will enjoy the fruit of our battle for all eternity in an incorruptible body.
The Apostle Paul foretells the suffering we need to endure if we want to serve Him. He says it is a privilege not only to live for Him, but also to suffer for Him. Phil. 1:29. To obey Him will be at the expense of our body. Our flesh will bear the brunt and the humiliation, and our Lord experienced this being persecuted on earth. Phil. 2. Through His humiliation He received all the power in heaven and on earth, and the way He had to go is an example to all of us.
We can expect no better, but our reward will be inconceivable. The choice is ours. Paul says that he had many reasons to boast Phil. 3:4–6 and the world will regard them as ideal virtues and good for his core curriculum. When Paul reflects all his accomplishments he considered them as loss or

a stumbling block, preventing him to achieve his eternal goal. We have great respect for any person who achieves something in life, but to God it is futile.
As Paul, we need to distance ourselves from this world, and we need to concede that our achievements here will have no eternal gain. Paul wanted to know Christ and the power of His resurrection. Phil. 3:10. If we live according to the desires of our flesh we will not be like Him. The more we are tuned to our flesh, the more we will suffer loss.
We can only put on the new man at the expense of the old. In whatever way we view this world it is one great battlefield. We can subject our bodies to Satan and possibly live comfortably on earth, but this will be at the expense of our eternal inheritance. We are mere players on a huge chess board, and its pieces are played above. We will never understand the game, but we know the outcome. Our flesh is involved as we daily fight against the principalities and powers in heaven. Since we did accept Christ, we cannot mandate any of our privileges here on earth, as we exchanged them for the better at Calvary. ‘Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s’ 1 Cor. 6:19, 20
A price is paid to redeem us from the law, sin and death that used to tag our previous lifestyle. Being free and being bought with a price, we can now glorify God in our bodies, with no restraining power. The world will dishonour us, but we will be honoured by Him. Paul admonishes us not to slip back but to continue serving the Lord. 1 Cor. 7:23.
The motive of God is not to grant us eternal life, but the real purpose is to demonstrate to the powers in heaven that our perishable bodies that used to be a tool for Satan could please God. That will be the final nail in Satan’s coffin. Our old and perishable body will serve the living God as he will breathe His life within it.

Joshua 2

This history of Rahab is relatively unknown, including the rationale why her house together with her family remained standing after Jericho was levelled to the ground. Rahab is mentioned three times in the New Testament, and her faith is an example to all of us. Despite her being a harlot, God overlooked her milieu and later in history her name is tied to become part of our Lord's lineage. Matt. 1:5.
Rahab believed wholeheartedly that the land of Canaan would be given to the Israelites, and she allowed the two spies into her home. She figured out that Israel would invade Jericho and they would be slain.
From verses 9–13 she puts forward her faith in God, and she admits that the land is already given to Israel. She knew that things would go wrong and in the end her brothel and family would be saved. In the Book of James and Hebrews, she is acknowledged for her faith in the living God, even though she was a harlot.

Many students wish to remove the stigma of her name from the lineage of Christ, arguing that she was not a harlot but rather a hostess or tavern keeper. No matter what her profession was, it was her faith that saved her by hiding the two men, thus putting her life at stake. In the Gospels of our Lord Jesus, He was continually amongst the harlots and tax collectors. The Lord conversed and ate with them and did that because they believed in Him. Rahab is mentioned in the New Testament and in many ways her story portrays our dispensation. It vividly portrays what God is doing for us right now.

The word Rahab in Hebrew means a wide or broad space, as she portrays the kindness of God's grace towards us. The Old Testament has frequent truths relating to our dispensation. Perpetually these truths surface and, by recognising them, we understand that the Bible speaks twice to us. We can differentiate truths from many angles, but they all convey a similar message of grace. The bulk of the Book of Genesis has really one great message detailing to us constantly why the obvious firstborn e. g. Ishmael, Esau and Reuben were not chosen and why instead it went to the second. Similarly, Israel is now sidelined by the Church, which is privileged above Israel. Joshua 1 is quoted many a time in our Church services as they understand the fibre of this message is similar to ours in the New Testament. When they study the following chapter they loathe Rahab being a harlot, and scorn the idea that it may have any prophetic insinuations. Rahab realised that God has given the land of Canaan to Israel, swaying her to work in unison with the two spies. With her words 'for the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below' v. 11 she assured her alliance with the God of Israel. Jericho is frequently mentioned, and it is unique as it is the lowest-lying city on earth and possibly the oldest, as well. The city has an oasis of palm trees along the River Jordan. The River is exceptional as it does not run into the sea, but rather into the Dead Sea. Jericho is 250 metres below sea level, and the Dead Sea even lower, about 400 metres below the waters. Jericho is an example of God's involvement in our world today, for being so low, the waters of the sea should have swallowed it. It is the lowest city on earth.

God judged our world with water, Gen. 1:2a; 2 Pet. 3:6 as our 'previous world' was spoiled by Satan. Our world which includes the earth, the first and the second heavens was swamped by water, and the history of Noah recapitulates that event. Before Adam was created on earth many things happened, and Satan was oblivious that God had a plan to redeem our world in Christ. It was planned before our previous earth and heavens were swamped by water. It is voiced in the New Testament by the word 'katabolē' found 11 times in the New Testament and that word has no pleasant memories. It is usually wrongly translated as 'foundations.' The root word is katabolē and the word means to cast down. It is the same word used when Satan will be cast down to earth. Rev. 12:9. Before our world was cast down when it was severely punished by a great flood, God in His wisdom created a plan in the risen Christ. The many waters receded, and He did that before Adam was created; it was part of God's salvation plan. Jericho is similar to our world as it is 250 metres below sea

level, and it's not supposed to be there, but it is. Similarly our world was judged, and it should have been below the sea as in Gen. 1:2a but instead God reached out His hand of mercy.
When God redeemed and re-created our world, Satan looked upon it as a weakness from God. Daily we can hear the arguments: 'why did God allow this, and why didn't He interfere?' People say they used to believe in a God, but now they rather believe He is dead.
Hours before the Lord Jesus was crucified He called His disciples together and prayed for them. He said:
'And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.' John 17:5
Christ did not pray for the glory He had before His birth in Bethlehem, but He claimed the glory He had much earlier. It was the glory He had before the world was cast down when it was spoiled by Satan. God judged Satan as He stained our earth with sin. It was the only means to rid the earth of sin. If He had left the world as it was, it would also reflect His righteousness. In the end, our world would have endured but stained by sin. In His wisdom, He developed a plan and our fallen world was part of it, to create something eternal. Adam was created from a fallen world, and as expected He sinned and died. 1 Cor. 15. God then lost His fame and glory, but He regained it with Christ's resurrection from the dead. Our spoiled world of sin secures Him no glory, but from this chaos a new creation emerges. Noah assures us that when we see a rainbow, God will not judge our world with the flood as He did before. Peter said if our world has to perish, it will be by fire. It has no right to exist, and it cannot persist as it is doomed. From the chaos of our fallen earth, a new creation will surface, and the corruptible will inherit the incorruptible. Once that is accomplished, the old will vanish in a cloud of smoke. Our past world that disappeared below the floods of water was well known by Plato, and He mentioned the city Atlantis, which disappeared below the waters. Egypt being a desert is also an example of our former world as its plains are swamped yearly by fertile waters, depositing soil from the Nile River. The water of the Nile recedes yearly to give Egypt its fertility and yield. Now our energy resources are dependent on the gas and the oil we gain from our previous fallen earth.
The people used to look for the origin of the Nile River thinking it had the sources of our world's richness. Our earth used to be covered by the waters, but God made it fruitful again and Adam was created with the purpose that finally 'He will gather together in one all things in Christ.' Eph. 1:10. We who believe in the resurrected Christ do attain the peak of God's optimum goal.
The water could either save us as during the time of Noah, or it can drown us. When the armies of Pharaoh pursued Israel, they drowned in the waters of the Red Sea. Out of the same waters Israel was born even though Egypt was their mother. With any childbirth 'the waters' do break and similarly when we were reborn and baptised in Christ. With adult baptism, we died when we submerged into the waters but we were raised when Christ rose from the dead. Now Jericho is located close to the Dead Sea, but it is not swamped by the deep waters as both Sodom and

Gomorrah, and the reason is that God withholds His judgement. After Joshua razed the city to the ground, God told Israel if any person endeavours to rebuild the city, he will be cursed. By means of this history God vividly reminds us that the work He is presently doing for us in Christ is scorned upon.

‘Cursed before the Lord be the man that rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. At the cost of his first-born shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.’ Josh. 6:26 Now the city is vibrant and closest to the deep or the abyss, proving someone did venture to rebuild its foundation upon the burial place of his youngest son. This history is remarkable as God did venture to rebuild our fallen earth or Jericho, and the cost is the life of the Lord Jesus, who died on the cross. He did succeed and the glory He once had will be returned to Him. It was a costly enterprise and it was at His expense, and being cursed, He continued steadfastly bearing the ‘cross’ with the purpose to redeem us from this world. ‘Cursed be every one who hangs on a tree’ Gal. 3:13

Our world was judged but surprisingly it was re-created again in 7 days by God at the cost of His first-born or youngest Son who is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. In 1 Kings 16:34 the two sons are named on whom the foundation was laid. ‘In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun. ’

The two sons were named Abiram meaning ‘the exalted one is my father.’ The name Segub means ‘to be set on high or to be exalted.’ The two sons have a similar meaning. God’s inventiveness to re-create our world by creating Adam was scorned upon by Satan as it reflected a weakness from God's side. If He had left the world, He would have demonstrated His righteousness, but instead He compromised Himself. In the end, His ultimate plan is vividly portrayed in the history of Rahab. She is a remnant of those who are rescued from our fallen world.

Whenever Jericho is mentioned in our Bible, it needs to remind us that God did re-create our once fallen world. During the time of the New Testament, our Lord regularly visited Jericho, and whenever He left the city, some people followed Him. An example is the two blind men Matt. 20:29, 30 and also Zacchaeus, who was the chief among the publicans. The publicans were the Roman tax collectors, and they were abhorred by the Jews, but our Lord Jesus did visit his house. The people who were called from Jericho are a clear picture of us today, as we are 'called from' our previous fallen world. The next question is who the two spies were who visited Rahab’s house? They are not named as their names remain a mystery. In some way, the two ought to remind us of the Church, the real firstborn. As the two spies, we are the first to claim the land of Canaan. The two conveys that we will receive a double portion, as we will rule both heaven and earth. In the Bible if a father had three sons the firstborn will receive a double portion or the 2/4 of his assets and the remaining two sons will each receive a ¼ and a ¼ of his assets.

Likewise, the name Ephraim denotes: ‘I shall be doubly fruitful.’ In various hidden ways is the name Ephraim tied to the Church. The two men sent

ahead to visit Jericho are a type of the Church who is the first to claim the Promised Land. The two blind men that followed the Lord from Jericho clearly depict our dispensation. In many ways the Church is portrayed as being part of the ‘two,’ as in the following verses:

One of Israel’s offerings was the wave offering which had two loaves made from one batch of dough. The two loaves were waved or shaken by the high priest 50 days following Christ’s resurrection. The movement or swaying of the loaves suggests life and hence it is known as the ‘wave offering.’ Lev. 23:20. It was part of the Feast of Weeks. The priest signifies Christ and despite the leaven (signifying sin) in the two loaves, it remained ‘alive’. This offering is different from all the other offerings, as it had leaven in the dough. This leaven is a reminder that we as part of the Church are daily in contact with a world stained by sin. Once with our rapture the problem of the leaven will be solved.

With Christ’s resurrection there were two men standing at an empty tomb. On the same day, Christ also appeared to two men who left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus. Luke 24:13. The men ought to have waited at Jerusalem until the third day, as the third day will bring the change. The third day is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and I am sure our Lord mentioned that to them.
‘And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself.’ Luke 24:27
Since Christ’s resurrection, He identified Himself only with those willing to receive Him, and He shunned the unbelieving world. Heb. 2:12. Indeed the Lord did open the eyes of the two men on the road to Emmaus.

- With Christ’s ascension on the Mount of Olives, two men stood on the place where He ascended into heaven. Possibly they were Moses and Elijah, who also appeared with the Lord on the mount when He was glorified. Luke 9:30.

- Paul sailed on a ship whose sign was Castor and Pollux, Acts 28:11 the two stars in the constellation of Gemini. It is better known as the twins. The Church is reflected upon as a ship buoyant above the turbulent waters, which picture the sea of nations.

- When the two disciples of John the Baptist followed our Lord, He invited them to follow Him to see where He lived. John 1:37–39. They followed Him, but never in the Gospels is it told where it was, as symbolically it portrays our present dispensation. We enquired of the Lord where He lived, and He told us to follow Him. Since we know the way, we have the freedom to meet Him in heaven. John 14:6.

The ‘two men’ or spies during Joshua’s time are mentioned several times in the Bible and they portray the Church. Being two, they symbolise us being the firstborn. Paul mentioned this twice in his letters. Rom. 8:29;

Heb. 12:23. We as Paul strive to be appointed as sons, and once that happens, we will be His firstborn. We are known as a nation of both kings and priests. ‘For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers’ Rom. 8:29
‘And He hath made us kings and priests unto God’ Rev. 1:6 The two men who spied Jericho are not named, and it does not surprise me. When they were with Rahab they secretly hid themselves, falling asleep on her rooftop. Similarly, we too are asleep to the world, as God has called us out of this world. Whilst being hidden, we are familiar with the mystery of His will, and we have the means to discern His plan. Eph. 1:9, 10.
As the two spies were the first to enter the land of Canaan, the Church will also be the first to enter His inheritance. We are dead, but yet alive unto Christ. Even though Jericho or the earth is cursed, we continue to live as the two men. The next obvious question to ask is: who is Rahab the harlot? In the Bible, a harlot is a type of Israel or the ten lost tribes, who worshipped other gods. Their history is clearly portrayed in Ezekiel 17.
In the eyes of the Jews, no life is more sinful than the life of a harlot or a tax collector. Both are unfaithful as in practice they worship other men or the Romans instead of their God. Before our Lord was crucified He visited Jericho and dined with Zacchaeus the tax collector. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He offended many people as He was known to spend lots of time with the tax collectors and harlots, as they were more ‘open’ to His teachings. Matt. 21:32. He did not try to impress the political or religious leaders of His time, but instead He chose to converse with the scandalous people of His time. The woman closest to the Lord was Mary Magdalene, and she was a harlot and known to have had seven evil spirits. Luke 8:2. Mary Magdalene portrays the ten lost tribes of Israel who despite being a harlot were called to repentance.
When the Lord Jesus was born at Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph had to take care of Him, but with His death there was another Mary and Joseph. Joseph of Arimathaea was a righteous man regardless of being a member of the Jewish council. He was from the town of Arimathaea.
This Joseph asked for the body of our Lord upon the cross, and He buried Him. He laid His body in a new tomb, in a graveyard belonging to Him. The first to witness Christ’s resurrection was Mary Magdalene and she as a harlot, portrayed the ten lost tribes of Israel. At the grave, she saw the two men standing there, and they asked her why she was weeping. Looking around, she then saw the resurrected Christ. That is no coincidence if, with Christ’s resurrection, we have a different Joseph and Mary. The garden with the new sepulchre wherein no body was ever buried belonged to Joseph. Christ rose from the dead in the tomb belonging to Joseph. When Mary first saw the resurrected Lord, she thought He was the gardener employed by Joseph of Arimathaea. John 20:15.
Joseph, as well as Mary Magdalene, always conveys the firstborn privileges of Israel or the ten lost tribes. Isaiah told the people that God will give them a sign: ‘Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and He shall call His name

Immanuel.’ Isa. 7:14
The birth of the Lord Jesus is the sign, and it is of great importance to us. Reasonably we may ask what this sign is? Some may sneer the question and argue the sign was a comparable birth like our Lord's at Bethlehem. There must have been another virgin mother. There is no record of such a birth after Isaiah’s time, and it would be no fulfilment of Scripture. The birth of the Lord Jesus is a sign of the Church that will be borne by means of another Mary and Joseph. The Church will be born from the ten tribes of Israel as witnessed in the history of Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathaea. Simply said the ‘Son’ that is born portrays the Church, and that is the sign!
Even if there was no tie between Judah (Jewish people) and the Lord after His resurrection, there will be a relationship between the resurrected Christ and the ten lost tribes of Israel. What’s more in Matthew 1 Joseph had a dream as the Joseph of old, and I believe it has to do with our dispensation that was hidden in the Old Testament. Mary the mother of Jesus rightly asked how is it possible after having no sexual bond with Joseph, to have a child. Similarly the Jewish nation shunned the resurrected Christ, and they had no relationship with Him, but amazingly from the ten lost tribes the Church is born.
In the ‘Da Vinci Code’, it is claimed that, after Christ’s resurrection, He and Mary Magdalene had a special relationship not cited in the Bible, and they had children in France. That is ridiculous, but it has some underlying truth. There was a platonic relationship having a typological meaning, and it is easily traced in our dispensation. The Lord did reveal Himself to those who believed in Him. Our dispensation commenced when Christ first appeared to:
* Mary Magdalene,
* then the ten disciples,
* and finally the Church.

Mary misidentified the Lord as the gardener in the garden of Joseph. Similarly during the history of Adam the gardener in the Garden of Eden protected the tree of life, and this could easily have been our Lord. Mary was the first to eat from the tree of life, and she communed with our Lord portraying the 10 lost tribes of Israel.
Even though the 10 lost tribes were unfaithful, even to the extent that they were sent into exile to Assyria, they returned, welcoming the message of God. Their enclave is particularly the United Kingdom a hiding place for the persecuted Christians. Throughout the past two millennia, they were always welcomed in the country. Rahab, who sheltered the two men and secured their escape, means broad and wide. Her name embodies both freedom and autonomy, and it implies the new covenant. Beneath the umbrella of the new covenant we are indeed free, at liberty and we are not restricted by the old covenant of Moses. During the time of Elijah, there was a school of prophets, and they found that the previous school was too small. 2 Kings 6.
They decided to build a larger dwelling, and they went to the River Jordan to hack wood. Symbolically speaking they were too limited (speaking of

the old covenant) and sought more space (new covenant). Elijah allowed them this extra space but things went wrong. When they cleaved the wood the axe broke from the handle, and it landed in the water.
The momentum of the axe (the old covenant of Moses) dislodged the axe, and it became unmanageable. It had to break as it exercised the powers of the law. The axe fell in the water but miraculously it drifted to the surface of the water, and their new school was built.
With the entrance of the new covenant, many things went wrong and foremost we can reflect on Judah, who rejected the resurrected Christ. Secretively the impetus of His message did not go to the 2 tribes who refused Him, but instead to the 10 tribes who accepted Him via the vision of the new covenant.
In Christ, we have total freedom and through Him we can leap over a wall. Ps. 18:29. Nothing can confine us and not even the laws of the old covenant (wall). Christ has broken down the middle wall that used to screen us. Eph. 2:14. Paul inspires us to stand in this freedom. Gal. 5:1. Rahab lowered the 2 men down the wall to escape the city, unto a great space outside the confines of the city. Similarly early in the Church history Israel enjoyed freedom even outside the confines of the Romans, in Britain. Most Christians today are unaware of the freedom they enjoyed early in the Church's history. Rahab placed them in that freedom and wittingly tricked their enemies. The two men were sleeping in a shelter, and that needs to refresh our memory to Joseph and many others who were dreaming.
Whenever a dream is mentioned in our Bible, it portrays our dispensation. Joseph dreamed twice before he was sold into slavery, twice in prison and later he elucidated the two dreams of Pharaoh.
Daniel also fell asleep many a time when the angel spoke to him, and annoyingly to him, he seemed to have lost the detail of the dream, or truths related to our dispensation. Adam also fell into a deep sleep, and during this sleep Eve was created. Any dream or sleep portrays our dispensation for during our long sleep the Church is born.
Ephesians 5 speaks of this mystery, and he refers to Eve (Church) as being part of Christ (Adam's) body.
Many theologians today believe that God is dead, and rightfully so as He is asleep to the problems of our world. They rejected Him on the cross and rightfully He turned His face from them. Unknowingly to the world there is a relationship with us and the Lord, and they are oblivious of our inheritance. In this chapter, the king of Jericho inspected her home but I think he turned a blind eye knowing he was powerless to do anything about it.
Early in our Church history many things happened to the Church and the powerful Roman Empire had no influence to restrain them. Many believers and even Mary with Joseph went to Britain and remained outside the confines of the Romans. There are many known prophecies in the Bible not written in its pages, but yet today we readily accept them as truths. I will name a few:

* In the years 70 A. D. the Romans barraged Jerusalem;
* The history of Antiochus Epiphanes, who infringed the temple service;
* The woman who danced demanding the head of John the Baptist.

They are not written in the Bible, but we believe them to be truthful. Similarly the history of the Church in Britain is known but it is not written in the pages of our Bible.

The woman (and here she is not named as she did it in secret) hid the men on the roof of her house, and she deceived the king telling him she did not know where they were. She told the people of Jericho to chase them, leading them in the wrong direction.

Early in the Church's history, the Christians were punished when the Romans tried to chase them, but despite this, it made them stronger. Not even Julius Caesar was able to conquer Britain, but the Emperor Claudius did conquer Britain. He was unable to penetrate the south-westerly district of Britain, or the enclave of the early Christians. It was for the good of Christianity as the royal household of Britain came in contact with Paul in prison and officially they converted to Christianity. Ever since then Britain accepted any believer in Britain, and they were never persecuted. Rahab allowed the men to be hidden on the rooftop beneath the stalks or flax of cotton. It was commonplace to dry their cotton on the rooftop.

Now the dwelling placed on the roof of any building will be called a penthouse, and we often read of them in the New Testament.

On the night of His betrayal, the Lord met with His disciples in a penthouse. The penthouse comes from the word penta or five denoting our dispensation. Later on the night of His resurrection He met His disciples, and I am sure it was the same upper room where they previously had the Passover. Probably this penthouse also belonged to Joseph of Arimathaea. The penthouse is raised, and it signifies heaven above, beyond the reach of our dark world of sin. It had a window in the ceiling allowing the light of the new covenant to penetrate it.

When Paul was at Troas they were in the upper room because there was much light. Acts 20. To Paul the world outside was clothed with darkness. During Paul's sermon when it became dark, a young man was seated close to the window, falling into a deep sleep. Accidentally he fell to the ground and died. Paul did raise him.

Paul's sermon emphasised that certain truths as light and 'deep sleep' belong to our dispensation or the penthouse. The young man was dead but yet he was raised again as the 10 lost tribes of Israel that were once forgotten.

This young man ought to remind us of the parable of the Lord Jesus, when He cited a father who had two sons. The one son remained with his father, and he reminds us of the two tribes of Israel who stayed with the Lord, but in the end the fatted calf was not slain for them. As the parable goes, it ended with the son who disappeared into the Assyrian exile (10 tribes) but in the end, he did return, and the fatted calf was slain for him. The once lost son did return to his father who awaited him. He repented even though he lived with the pigs. Understandably there was jealousy between the 2 and the 10 tribes of Israel, but the 10 tribes of Israel did clinch the

much talked about firstborn rights.
Upon the rooftop of Rahab's house was the cotton flax.
Cotton speaks of the priesthood as on the Great Day of Atonement the high priest only wore the cotton garment. Cotton is processed, unlike wool having natural fibres. The cotton and the wool were never allowed to be worn together as the one speaks of our old and the suffering world, and the other of the eternal and the immortal. Wool is vulnerable to the common cloth moth and it decays, Isa. 51:8 unlike the cotton that conveys eternal matters.
The high priest used to wear a cotton garment woven with no seams in it. The entire garment portrays our dispensation. The Lord also wore a seamless linen garment, and He used that to wash His disciples' feet. That pictures His present High Priestly task for us. When Peter went to the grave, he first saw the empty linen cloth with nobody inside, as our Lord was wrapped in a linen garment with His birth and burial. Luke 2:12; 23:53. The two men that spied Jericho were hidden beneath the linen flax and even having no priestly role then, they certainly portrayed truths belonging to our dispensation. Rahab had faith in the God of Israel, and she acknowledged Him. Many Christians today scorn the idea that God cleaved the mighty Red Sea to allow the passage of Israel. They believe it was a natural event, and possibly a gust of wind may have dried a reed bed. She had real faith and Ruth is another example as she wanted to acquaint herself with the God of Israel.
The two spies that were helped by Rahab to escape were typologically couriers for the Church, and they related themselves with her. In turn, they promised that she would be blessed with them.
Rahab hoisted them down with a scarlet rope through the window, and this ought to remind us of Paul, whose life was similarly saved when he was lowered in a basket. Acts 9:25. This history has great importance to Paul as he again mentioned it, 2 Cor. 11:32, 33 and I am sure he wanted to relate his experience to the two spies in Jericho.
Rahab told the spies to go to the mountains or to the west to hide themselves for 3 days. Again the 3 days epitomise our dispensation.
As a gratitude to Rahab the two men told her to tie the same scarlet rope to her window, as that would guarantee her escape. Her entire family had to gather in her house, and each of them would be saved by the scarlet rope. The scarlet cord would save the messengers of Joshua, and the household of Rahab, even though she had to wait a few days.
We may ask: why the scarlet cord? The cord expresses our hope. In the Hebrew language, the word scarlet is derived from the word 'shaniy' meaning a double or a second. It relates to 'sheniy' meaning not this one but the other. The Hebrew word cord or 'tiqvah' means hope or expectation.
Due to it being a scarlet cord we have 'another or a better hope' clearly implying our dispensation. The expectancy of both the two men and Rahab was tied to this one rope. Similarly today we have a better hope, Heb. 7:19 and it exceeds any hope as our investment is locked away in heaven.

There is a very remarkable history in Genesis 38, reflecting our dispensation. It is sandwiched between the 2 chapters dealing with the history of Joseph. This chapter is not very well known as it deals with the history of Judah (2 tribes) and Joseph (10 tribes). Tamar is in the centre of the chapter and her name in Hebrew means ‘a palm tree.’ It is a large tree with a crown of branches on top, and this crown conveys kingship. Tamar should have had a child from one of Judah’s sons, but that never happened. Unwittingly Judah her father in law involved himself with Tamar, who disguised herself as a harlot.

In the end, Tamar walked away with the signet, the cord and staff that belonged to Judah. All three of them denote Judah’s firstborn rights. The staff is mentioned several times in our Bible as the staff of Aaron that blossomed again. Num. 17:8. A signet ring with its emblem denotes the identity of the real firstborn. In this chapter, the identity has changed and the staff, cord and signet have landed in the hands of the real firstborn. In the Old Testament, it was given to Christ but via the Church we are also part of its promises.

Both Judah and Tamar worked in secret but in the end their identities were revealed. Now as with any childbirth an identity tag is placed around their wrist or ankle, but here a scarlet cord is tied around the wrist.

At the time when Tamar delivered, they discovered she had twins. That needs to draw our attention to Jacob and Esau and the discord they had to determine who the real firstborn was. During this unusual childbirth, a hand appeared, and the midwife wrongly thought that the infant with the ‘hand’ was the first to be born. They tied a scarlet cord around its wrist, but bizarrely the hand withdrew itself, and he was not the first. He had to wait for his twin brother who was the real firstborn or Perez meaning a breach. The Church is the breach in God’s history, and the birth of the second son had to wait until the Church is complete. Indeed the other child was born who had the scarlet cord around its wrist.

In God’s plan, there is a breach in His plan. When Judah’s hand was pulled back into the womb, his blessings were instead poured out on the other child or Perez that in secret symbolised Joseph or the Church. The scarlet cord conveys that the real ‘hope’ is invested in Perez (Church) and not in Zarah.

The word Judah (yadah) means a hand (yad) and it is the hand that appeared and disappeared to make way for the real firstborn, which is Ephraim or the Church.

That is true as Simeon once prophesied when seeing the child Jesus. ‘Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.’ Acts 15:14

If everything went according to plan Judah would have been the firstborn but there was a twist in God’s plan. Typically unknown to many today the blessings did not go to the 2 tribes, but instead it is invested in the 10 remaining tribes that were in the Assyrian exile. Now the promises of God are not locked away in the ‘two’ but rather in the ‘ten. ’

Zarah the other twin is still in the womb, waiting to be born. That will happen during the great tribulation, once they call on the Name of the Lord.

The real question remains whether Perez was the son of Judah or its grandson? Israel was known as the sons of God: ‘Israel is my son, even my firstborn.’ Exod. 4:22
Thus is the Church known as the grandson or the sons of Israel. Lawfully Perez is regarded as a son of Judah. We as the Church are the real Israelites, the first to enter His rest. ‘Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded’ Rom. 11:7 Perez conveys the significance of our time and not Zarah.

Joshua 3 and 4

Event or Symbol	Source	Spiritual Meaning/Representation	Prophetic Import or Timeline	Related Dispensation	Typology (Inferred)
Crossing from Shittim to Gilgal	Joshua 3, Micah 6:5	The way from darkness to the light of the new covenant; transition from the perishable to the eternal.	Portrays Israel entering the promises of the new covenant after a period of darkness.	Transition from Law/Desert to New Covenant/Promised Land.	Israel's entry into the Promised Land as a type of the believer's entrance into the spiritual blessings of Christ.
The Ark of the Covenant	Joshua 3:3, Hebrews 9:4	Represents the life and faith of Jesus Christ on earth; the vessel protecting the Word of God.	Its movement guides the people toward their future inheritance.	Grace (presently) and the future restoration of Israel.	The Ark as a type of Christ's humanity (wood) and deity (gold).
2000 Cubit Distance	Joshua 3:4	The spiritual distance or remoteness between Israel and Christ during their period of blindness.	A 2000-year gap between Christ's resurrection and Israel's future rebirth/repentance.	Dispensation of Grace (the current 2000-year period).	The historical interval where the Church is near to Christ while Israel is at a distance.
10th of Nissan	Joshua 4:19, Exodus 12:3, Luke 19:42-44	The day of visitation; preparation for deliverance and selection of the lamb.	End of Daniel's 69th week; the date Israel crossed Jordan and Christ entered Jerusalem.	End of Law/Transition to Grace.	The selection of the Paschal lamb as a type of Christ being presented to Israel as their Messiah.
Shittim Wood	Exodus 25, Joshua 3	Represents the 'old man', the perishable human body, and Christ's humiliation in the flesh.	The 'old' state before being renewed or clothed with the eternal.	Dispensation of Law/Humanity.	A type of the human nature of Christ which was 'enveloped' by the gold of His deity and resurrection.
Gilgal (Rebirth/Rollin	Joshua 5:9	The 'rolling away' of reproach; denotes	The point of Israel's future	Millennium (Future Kingdom).	Circumcision at Gilgal as a

g)		rebirth or being born again.	national repentance and circumcision of heart.		type of the spiritual 'new birth' in the New Testament.
12 Stones at Gilgal / in Jordan	Joshua 4:8-9, 1 Peter 2:5	The monument in Jordan represents the hidden Church; the monument at Gilgal represents visible restored Israel.	An everlasting witness to God's deliverance and the gathering of the 12 tribes.	Grace (hidden stones) and Millennium (visible stones).	The stones as 'living stones' representing individual believers built into a spiritual house.
Joshua (Leader)	Joshua 3:7	The exalted leader who brings the people into the inheritance.	Christ being made great in the eyes of Israel at His return.	Future Kingdom.	Joshua as a type of the resurrected and glorified Christ.

And Joshua ‘rose early’ in the morning. This is a frequent saying in our Bible. We frequently read of Abraham rising early in the morning, and similarly Jacob who erected and anointed the stone after seeing God in a dream. Gen. 28:18.

The night reminds us of the darkness surrounding the retreat of Satan. This gloomy darkness was forever broken with Christ’s resurrection from the dead. Each sunrise needs to remind us of this truth as the Word of God (Light) will envelop our dark world.

If any blessing is bestowed on Israel, it was usually given in the morning. When our Lord physically returns to earth on the day of the Lord, the earth will be gloomy and dark. The only light then shining for Israel will be His glory on the Mount of Olives. He will bless them with the radiance of the new covenant. This light is presently shining in our hearts 2 Cor. 4:6 even though our world lives in darkness.

The world is oblivious of the light. We are the children of the day and need to walk accordingly. 1 Thess. 5:5. Israel was often called to the light but persistently they refused it. Isa. 2:5

The Light of the new covenant has come: ‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee’ Isa. 60:1, 2

This is a very frequent quotation in the New Testament. In the Gospel of John alone, the Lord Jesus spoke 16 times of this light, and He was saddened as the world refused it. John was called to bear witness of this light John 1:8 and the obvious question is why? Light is revealing in itself, but John had to talk about it as the world was blind and could not differentiate it. John 9.

The people thought they could ‘see’ but the Lord knew that they were blind. There are myriads of verses in the Bible encouraging us to be awake and to walk in the light. The Gospel of John can be structured around the 7 nights in the Book, as Nicodemus, who quietly sought the Lord in darkness.

Israel had to wake early in the morning for they had to follow a route from Shittim to Gilgal through the River Jordan. This route portrays them

entering the promises of the new covenant. Micah called Israel to commit to memory their past history and the way they followed from Shittim to Gilgal.
‘Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, which you may know the righteous acts of the Lord.’ Micah 6:5 (NIV)
It is the way from the darkness to the promises engulfed by the light of the new covenant. In the Hebrew language, Gilgal literally means wheel and the verb means to roll. It is the closest word in the Old Testament that denotes our common word ‘rebirth.’ The import of the word is captured in Joshua 5:9: ‘today I have rolled away the reproach of Israel. ’
The word ‘rebirth’ or the experience of being ‘born again’ is captured in the word Gilgal. The occult is not familiar with terms as ‘rebirth’ and rather speak of reincarnation. To them the word means ‘to be made flesh again’ and similarly they symbolise that by a wheel. They are caught in a wheel going from the one ‘cycle’ of life to the next. It is known as the accustomed wheel of reincarnation.
Nicodemus asked the Lord Jesus to elucidate the term rebirth John 3 and He told him that rebirth is not via natural birth or via the mother but merely through the Father or the Spirit. Reincarnation is the concept that the soul, or some aspect of the soul, is reborn into new lives. Satan purposely tries to downgrade the real meaning of the word rebirth.
Going through the River Jordan exemplifies rebirth and how the land of Canaan will be conquered by Israel. At Gilgal 12 stones were erected as a monument to signify their rebirth, and their circumcision at Gilgal also portrays it.
Shittim was the last camp of Israel in the desert. This word has no polite meaning, and it is rooted from the English word ‘shit,’ having a vulgar undertone. In our polite world, it is best avoided. We rather speak of it as our faeces. Shittim (Strong’s number 7851) is a harsh word and stems from the same root as the word Satan (Strong’s number 7853) that equally needs to be avoided. On a better tone, it could also be translated as wood. People tend to think of it as an ‘acacia wood’ that used to grow in the desert, but I doubt this as the quality of the wood would have been too poor. Israel could easily have collected the wood for building the tabernacle outside the boundaries of the desert. The wood was also used for building the ark. The ark is a coffer, and it is the identical word used for the basket wherein Moses used to hide himself in the reed bed. An aeroplane or boat is also a container or an ark, carrying people.
The first two tablets of stone were broken by Moses. To prevent it from happening again, God told him to build an ark of shittim wood to protect the two new tablets of stone. This coffer was later layered by gold, and it was in the heart of the tabernacle. The shittim wood was totally enveloped by the gold, but the wood was the framework of the ark. The mercy seat placed on top of the ark was made from a solid piece of gold. In the Hebrew language, the word ‘mercy seat’ is ‘kapporeth.’ This Hebrew word means to cover or to reconcile. Our sins were evident but thankfully it is completely covered, settled and forgotten. Nothing of the ‘old’ is visible. The flammable and perishable shittim wood is the old man and fortunately our worthless bodies will be renewed. The perishable will be clothed with

the eternal. The way from Shittim to Gilgal is the way from the perishable (wood) to the eternal (gold) or the way from darkness to light. Similarly we used to know the Lord Jesus as part of the flesh but thankfully we do no longer know Him as such. We see Him but as the risen Christ. ‘Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more.’ 2 Cor. 5:16. Everything has become new, as the old is forgotten. Before the light appeared at Gilgal, it was dark at Shittim. There is a great contrast between the two. In the beginning, our Lord Jesus was the light of the world but the people were fooled and blinded by Satan. With our Lord’s death, He experienced total darkness beneath the earth for two days, but on the 3rd day He arose with the profusion of light. Similarly before Israel crossed the River Jordan they had to wait in darkness at Shittim before being delivered on the **3rd day**.

How the 3 days are calculated does not matter. We have multiple instances of the 3rd day in our Bible and we are certain that any deliverance will always be on the 3rd day. Joshua frequently speaks of the 3rd day and it does not matter which day or in which chronological order. The real meaning is locked away in the number three.

Three speaks of the promises God made to Abraham during the 3rd dispensation, and then it was not tangible. Most tend to think of the trinity when dealing with this number. That is wrong and misleading. The trinity is wrongly based, and it is only cited once in 1 John 5:7. Many translators refuse its validity, believing the verse is wrongly placed in our Bible.

The letter 3 implies the promises of God. Once His promises are realised or visible we are in the ‘four.’ An example is the mould or the cast of a figure, as this gives us an idea of the outline of the final figurine. The mould is the letter three and the final product is the four.

If the Lord had to rise from the dead it had to be on the 3rd day as the promises of God are usually fulfilled on that day. Every 3 in the Bible has to do with the promises of God; whether they are made or fulfilled. There are myriad examples e. g. when Israel crossed the Red Sea it had to be on the 3rd day and now again when they had to cross the River Jordan. No matter how we look at it, it always has to be on the 3rd day. Israel received the law on Mount Sinai on the 3rd day. Exod. 19:11.

Nine times it is mentioned that Christ will rise on the 3rd day, and yet the two on the way to Emmaus were ignorant of that. Whenever Israel moved camp they had to follow the ark that was always carried by the priests. The shittim wood is the Lord Jesus when He walked on earth, and the gold that covered the wood or ark portrays His resurrection from the dead. The purpose of the ark is not to guide Israel through the desert but rather that the inside hides the 2 tablets of stone or the Word of God. It had to be protected in the ark to avoid it from breaking to pieces, as with the previous two tablets of stone that were broken by Moses. Throughout the Old Testament we are aware that inside the ark were only the two stone tablets, but strangely Paul says Heb. 9:4 ‘in’ the ark we find the golden pot with manna and the staff of Aaron that budded.

The misunderstanding is that our word ‘in’ is not similar to the word ‘in’ in the Greek language. The Greek word ‘in’ has a greater meaning than our word denoting that the manna and the staff of Aaron are bonded

spiritually with the ark, but not physically inside the ark. When we read that Christ is in our heart, it denotes a spiritual truth, and that is not a pure physical one. In the tabernacle, the manna and the staff of Aaron were not in the Holiest but rather outside in the sanctuary alongside the veil.

The ark is the life of Christ, and it portrays the faith of the Lord Jesus on earth. The Lord Jesus harboured the Word of God and constantly was truthful to it. The Word of God can only be entrusted to Him as He will not break the tablets of stone as Moses did. Only the Lord Jesus kept and protected the Word and His heart was filled by it. His life was centred on the Word and John said He was the Word of God. John 1:1. The Lord Jesus fulfilled the Word by protecting it within His body. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in our Bible, and it has one message. It is Christ alone who can fulfil all the promises in the written Word. ‘I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.’ v. 168

He is the reason for our salvation. He had to learn obedience as ourselves and in all His ways He was alike to us. ‘Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.’ Heb. 5:7–9

Even though He was humiliated by dwelling on our earth, He also had to learn obedience through His continual suffering. The outcome was His unwavering faith in the Word of God, and His faith is our bastion. We always tend to think that our faith will get us into heaven. It is wrong as our life is solely tied to the faith He had on earth. We can trace the truths concerning His faith in the old translations e. g. : ‘Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ’ Gal. 2:16 ‘Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.’ Rom. 3:22

If our Lord failed to be obedient and veered off from His pathway of faith, then we would have forfeited our chances of eternal redemption.

We can ask the question of Psalm 119: ‘Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?’ v. 9 The young man is Our Lord Jesus who remained truthful to His Word. Who else can it be? The faith of the Lord Jesus is mentioned Rom. 1:17; 5:19 and it permeated our lives too – it is the footing of our inheritance. ‘And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.’ Heb. 5:9 When Israel entered the Promised Land it was thankfully due to the ark or Christ. Israel following the ark portrays the bond we have with the resurrected Christ. The Apostle Peter and Paul continually prompt us to follow Christ or the ark. When Israel saw the ark of God rising in the wilderness they had to follow it. The pillar of cloud by day and the fire that towered the ark at night portrays Christ as the Spirit. The ark is a picture of the Lord Jesus as Man belonging to our human race, but interestingly the mercy seat or the cherubs placed on the ark pictures Him as God. The lid of the ark was the cherubs or the mercy seat, and it was one lump of gold. It expressed Him as the eternal.

Paul portrays Him with the following words: ‘Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever’ Heb. 13:8

This is puzzling to many as in the previous 12 chapters of the Book of Hebrews He is pictured in a different way. He was God and willingly He

involved Himself with our earth. His humiliation is vividly detailed in the shittim wood, as He had a body like ours. He was weakened as the Son of man, but surprisingly to Satan He regained all His former glory through His resurrection from the dead. Satan never calculated that!
He was then enveloped by gold, and He regained His eternal entitlements. The old shittim wood is buried and will forever be hidden by the gold.

* The ark with the two tablets of stone views Him from an earthly perspective;
* the mercy seat with the cherubs regards Him as the eternal;
* the pillar of cloud and fire on top witnesses Him as the Spirit.

There were four cherubs above the ark (two pairs) and below the ark were the priests carrying the ark, or the wheels during the time of David. In the Old Testament when the prophets tried to grasp our dispensation they saw Christ as Ezekiel of old. In Ezekiel 1 & 10 we read of four creatures with wings touching one another. Above them were burning coals of fire and lightning. Below them were wheels that turned. They are awkward chapters, and many feel disheartened by reading them thinking they make no sense. They have no idea what they imply. It is not difficult as it portrays a simple picture of the ark. At night the ark had the pillar of fire and the four cherubs are the four living creatures. See my notes on the tabernacle. The complete picture is the glorified Christ in our dispensation, and it is also pictured in Rev. 4. Ezekiel named the ‘ark’ the ‘glory of the Lord.’ Ezek. 1:28.
In Ezekiel, this vision appears to him time and again, and the wheels need to remind us of Gilgal or rebirth. It was a complete unit and with this symbolism only Christ is portrayed. It is no UFO visiting our planet with fancy gadgets.
After David captured Jerusalem, he transported the ark on a ‘new’ wagon and things went awfully wrong for him. 2 Sam. 6. Then there was a great festival and David expected to return the ark to Jerusalem, back to its rightful place. David transported the ark on a new wagon having wheels. The oxen that were ahead towing the ark were unable to bear its weight. In the Bible when the ‘new’ comes into place, many things can go wrong. The oxen pulling the ark stumbled making it nearly fall.
Thankfully Uzzah (who portrays the kingship of Christ) prevented the ark from capsizing to the ground, but tragically he was struck down and died. Regardless of his death his brother Ahio lived, and he portrays Christ’s priesthood today.
The oxen that stumbled are Israel, staggered beneath the curse of the law being unable to bear its weight. Things went wrong when the Lord Jesus died. The ark stumbled but luckily Uzzah (Lord Jesus) saved the ark with the tablets or Word of God inside of it. His promises will be sustained, but He will forfeit His kingship as portrayed in the death of Uzzah.
Instead of Christ being King, He is now our High Priest as portrayed by Ahio, who continued living. The ark was taken to the Gentiles at Obed-edom for 3 months, and they were blessed, vividly portraying the blessings of our dispensation.

The first time the Mount of Olives is mentioned in the Bible is when Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord on the mountain east of Jerusalem. This was also the last time Christ was seen with His ascension into heaven. Ezek. 11:23. Isaiah also had a vision of the Lord. Isa. 6. In the year when Uzziah the king died, Isaiah saw seraphim and fire.
The word cherubs (meaning firstborn), seraphim and the four living creatures in the Book of Revelation are all graphical imagery of spiritual truths. Similarly we believe that angels have wings and that both the dragon and the unicorn exist, but they are mere symbolism. In the opening verses of the Books of Ezekiel, Isaiah and Revelation we have many symbolisms to portray Christ's magnificence. The reason for all the symbolism in the Bible is that any sceptic unbelieving person will never grasp the real truths concerning our glorified Christ. That is the reason we live in the time of God's mystery but we have the means to unravel its truths. The Lord said that Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord in Isaiah 6. 'Because he saw the glory of the Lord when he spoke of Him.' John 12:41 Both Isaiah and Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord, but things went wrong for them. Ezekiel saw the vision, but it left him at the Mount east of Jerusalem where Christ did ascend to heaven. Isaiah was told that he would preach to a nation that does stumble and is blind. Isa. 59:10.
The irony is that the world will not notice His glory, as the ark and the oxen in David's time were hidden. Instead, His glory went to a Gentile family at Obed-edom, as the principal truths concerning our dispensation are treasured there concerning the Church.
Despite all the previous mishaps, the Book of Revelation will end with a climax. It ends with Christ's Kingdom enveloping both heaven and earth. Similarly during the time of Joshua things did not go to plan as there had to be a distance of 2000 cubits between the ark and the people of Israel. In our earthly sphere things will go wrong as foretold by the many prophets. We need to understand that we live in the time of God's promises (3), and we need to wait patiently for our heritage (4). 'When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God with the Levitical priests carrying it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.' Josh. 3:3 The people had to follow the ark as previously in the desert. That may have been their 42nd time altogether, but that day was rather unique. It reads: 'However, there shall be between you and the ark a distance of about 2,000 cubits by measure. Do not come near it that you may know the way by which you shall go, for you have not passed this way before.' v. 4
On the whole, the commentators mistakenly assume that the 2000 cubits distance between the ark and Israel was needed to allow everyone to see the ark. They argue that Israel was unfamiliar with the terrain. Even though the distance between the people and the ark was about 900 metres, they needed this distance for everyone to view the descent of the ark to the valley? My argument against that is why they needed to find out the way to the River Jordan, as the route descending to the valley is very obvious. They merely had to cross a river running between two valleys.
Previously Israel used to walk close to the ark and why now this distance?

To me the 900 metres have no rationale, but we will discover that this distance has a prophetic impact. Numerous times in the New Testament we are prompted to follow our Lord as in Mark 8:34 ‘Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. ’ We need to be close to Him, but on the contrary some believe that there ought to be a ‘distance’ between us and the most holy God. Opposing this Paul says that we are one with Christ, 1 Cor. 12:27 and seeking His face we will be changed from glory to glory. 2 Cor. 3:18.

For me, the only logical explanation for the 2000 cubits distance between Israel and the ark (Christ) is that there will be a 2000-year gap between Christ’s resurrection and Israel’s rebirth. The remoteness of the 2000 cubits is not between Christ and the Church but between Him and Israel. I believe that in the near future Israel will yet again cross the River Jordan. That will happen once more soon after the day of the Lord when He will call them back to the Promised Land. We read: ‘Who is this who comes from Edom, from the city of Bozrah, with his clothing stained red? Who is this in royal robes, marching in the greatness of his strength? “It is I, the Lord, announcing your salvation! It is I, the Lord, who is mighty to save!”’ Isa. 63:1

The Lord will rally with Israel in their journey from Petra (Bozrah) to Jerusalem. At that time, they will be familiar and recognise the way they need to go. Josh. 3:4 Presently we live in the ‘2000 cubits’ time period. During those 2000 years, Israel did lose sight of the ark, and they stumbled in darkness. They are unaware of the resurrected Christ, but once they repent they will meet the ark in the riverbed and ascend with it to the Promised Land. There is no doubt in my mind that the 2000 years denote our time of grace, and once it is completed, God will reckon yet again with Israel. The 2000 years is fixed, and Peter said that the Lord is not slack concerning this promise. 2 Pet. 3:3–9. Being ‘not slack’ really means that God is unswerving regarding the time of His coming. Peter challenged the people who mocked the idea that Christ will ever return to earth again. He challenged them with the words of Hosea 5:14–6:3 saying that Christ will certainly come on the 3rd day and that a day can be regarded as a thousand years. Hosea warned Israel that God’s wrath will be poured out upon both Ephraim and Judah until they will seek His face. During their suffering in the great tribulation they will seek Him. He will revive them (Israel) after two days and on the 3rd day He will make them rise from the dead or the waters. They will rise with the ark from the River Jordan and look upon the risen Christ. Presently Judah is in the land of Israel, and they refuse to accept Christ. Personally I believe that when Israel is devastated on the great Day of Atonement, the leader of Israel will officially call on the Name of the Lord. The Great Day of Atonement is the most significant date in Israel’s calendar and the Lord will personally come to their rescue.

Today Israel is too stubborn, and they refuse to call on His Name, but once on the 3rd day when they call on His Name, He will not be laid-back concerning His promise. We may argue that the two-day period or 2000 years is a vague time, but to God it is fixed, and certainly He will not delay His promises. Throughout this chapter, there are many clues that need to

remind us of Israel's future repentance. We can liken our baptism to the time when Israel descended and rose from the River Jordan. Paul says with our baptism we went down into the waters, and that is likened to our death, and when we rose from the water we became part of the resurrected Christ. Rom. 6:2–6. Once Israel rose from the 'waters' they went to Gilgal and there they were circumcised.
The Lord said to Joshua that on 'this day' he will be exalted in the sight of all Israel. 3:7; 4:14.
It is not Israel, but rather Joshua or Christ that will be exalted. Any blessing we did receive is not from ourselves, but our salvation is entirely dependent on Christ's work in our bodies. Christ received the glory through His resurrection, and it will be shared with us. Presently God is preparing a people for His Name, Acts 15 and He purifies them as a people for His own possession. Titus 2:14. Joshua and Moses were praised for God's great work in Israel, but in essence only God should be glorified. Moses certainly had no vision of being a great leader, as he withdrew himself when God called him. When God speaks to Joshua He indirectly relates to Christ, who alone is worthy of all adoration. Joshua is merely a type of the resurrected Christ. Presently the Church is to the glory of Christ and when in future Christ will reveal Himself, we will see Him in all His glory. Great emphasis is placed on the priests who carried the ark: 'and when they touched the waters, they shall be divided.' 3:13
The priests carrying the 'ark' are a type of Christ with His Church, who will be the first to cross the River Jordan. As previously mentioned, the priests portray the Church, who will be the first to share the blessings of the new covenant. Following the 2000-year period, Israel will be the first to descend into the River Jordan. When they crossed the river, each tribe had to collect a large stone at the bottom of the river, to erect a huge monument at Gilgal. The 12 stones are a sign 4:6 that in the future the complete 12 tribes of Israel will again be gathered at the same spot. That time there will be no compromise as in the future God will gather all the tribes of Israel under the 'one umbrella.' Similarly in Ezekiel 37 the tribe of Judah (one stick) and the tribe of Ephraim (10 tribes) the other stick, will bond again to complete God's prophecy.
When they crossed the river, it said that it was during the time of their harvest. That is strange for they crossed the river in early spring, and it was too early for the harvest. It was then the sowing season. Figuratively speaking it is correct as in the future when for the second time they do cross the River Jordan, the world is ready for a great harvest. Rev. 14:15. The new covenant has come and therefore the harvest is ready. When the Lord Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, He told her that since He has come the harvest is ready. 'Do you not say, "There are still four months and then comes the harvest"? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest' John 4:35
The fields are white for harvest, and the four months describe the previous 4 dispensations or the 4000 years from Adam until Christ's coming to earth. We now live in the 5th dispensation and can reap the blessings He did grant us.

Even though Israel entered the land early in the season on the 10th Nissan, they were promised a great harvest. The great harvest in the Book of Revelation is at the end of the 40 years of the great tribulation, and then the kingdoms of the earth will succumb to His reign. From the city of Adam, the entire River Jordan dried up. v. 16. Today we are not acquainted with such a town, as it was never mentioned again in our Bible or any of our history books. Here again, the great import is not the small town, but rather its prophetic import. The waters of the River Jordan piled up at Adam and gathered in one place. Previously in the great flood we had a similar gathering of water:

'And God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place"' Gen. 1:9

A few verses later in the same breath Adam is mentioned. As the thrust of the waters were gathered at Adam, similarly God also reckoned with the mighty waters that used to flood our earth. I think by mentioning 'Adam' it reflects the import of God's work today, and what He is doing right now for us. The waters dried up from Adam to the 'Dead Sea.' Today it is safe to cross the 'river' and to escape God's future judgement. Even though Adam was a small unknown town, it has a far greater significance. 4000 years have lapsed between the creation of Adam and the birth of the second Adam at Bethlehem. As with Adam we as the Church did conquer the floods of the deep, and it will not overwhelm us. According to Genesis 1, on the 3rd day, the great waters that used to flood our earth settled in the abyss or the deep. That important day portrays Christ's resurrection from the dead, when He tamed the waters of the deep to conquer the abyss, the hiding place of Satan.

Twice later in history the waters of the River Jordan divided: once with both Elijah and Elisha and soon afterwards with Elisha. I believe the river will divide once more when Israel repents and they are forced to cross the River Jordan on the Day of the Lord. They will flee to Petra, and the existing Allenby Bridge at Jericho will possibly be destroyed by a great earthquake. The alternative route for them is to escape via En-gedi to Petra, not having to traverse the River Jordan, but then they are forced to traverse the mountainous desert. That route is shorter, but it will be a more hazardous terrain.

75 days later the repented Israel will return from Petra to cross the river once more to claim the Promised Land. Then Christ or the 'real Joshua' will lead them. As in the past during the time of Elijah and Elisha the river divided twice, similarly in the future the river may again be divided twice. Whilst the ark was still in the river bed, Joshua prepared 12 men from each tribe to collect 12 stones from the river bed that was close to the feet of the priests who carried the ark. The stones portray death, and they were gathered from the 'deep.' These stones will be an everlasting witness to Israel, to remember their deliverance. The water did cleave once the ark (portraying Christ) touched the waters. The emphasis is not Israel but rather the ark or Christ. Similarly today our salvation is not dependent on us, but it is solely dependent on Christ's redemptive work. As the ark descended and ascended from the waters, we similarly in Christ

were redeemed from its oppressive powers. The 12 stones that used to be in the ‘deep’ were elevated and served as a monument. Similarly we also in Christ are the ‘living stones’ or alive and part of the Church: ‘Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.’ 1 Pet. 2:5

Our beginning is not noble as we emerge from the dead and similarly it is also true for Israel once they repent. Secondly Joshua placed 12 stones as a monument in the midst of the River Jordan, and we never read of that monument again. 4:8. This chapter mentions two monuments: the one in the River Jordan and the other was visible at Gilgal. The monument in the River Jordan, which was quietly built by Joshua, is a clear picture of our Church today. We are delivered but yet we are hidden, and the world is unaware of us. They are oblivious of our position in Christ in heaven. We will remain a mystery to them but once after the rapture the world will see us with Christ.

There were 12 stones, and after all the 12 stones strongly suggest that the Church has its roots in Israel. Joshua, who was from the tribe of Ephraim or Joseph, built the altar in the river bed, and that history resembles the ten tribes, who for the past 2000 years are the living stones. They remained faithful to the Gospel.

I do not suggest that the Church comprises only of the 10 tribes of Israel and not the heathen nations. In the world of symbolism, the 10 tribes do portray the Church, and that is where it ends as our lineage has nothing to do with our inheritance in Christ. On the other hand, the monument that was built at Gilgal was visible, and it depicts Israel’s future repentance on the day of the Lord.

Each tribe placed a big monolith or stone in the midst of the river bed.

I believe there were 2 piles of stone: one in the riverbed and the other at Gilgal. The Scripture is very clear: ‘They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the LORD had told Joshua, and they carried them over with them to their camp, where they put them down. Joshua also set up another pile of twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing.’ 4:8, 9

The priests, who carried the ark ahead of the people, are another picture of the Church today. On the place where they stood, in the middle of the river, a monument was erected by Joshua depicting the Church. Additionally the priests who carried the ark were 2000 cubits in front of the people of Israel. There is a clear difference between the priests who carried the ark and the nation as a whole. We as the Church of Christ belong to the holy priesthood 1 Pet. 2:5 and symbolically we carried the ark as we are ‘one’ with Christ. He is our Head, and when He does reveal Himself, it will be via His Church. As God is the head of Christ, similarly today Christ is now the head of the Church. 1 Cor. 11:3. The blessings Christ received were from God His Father, and He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Eph. 1:3. The blessings we received are from Christ Himself, and in the future Israel will be blessed via the Church. There is a clear hierarchy. Christ is blessed by God and the Church by Christ. Similarly, Israel will be blessed by the Church and the heathen

nations by Israel. Hours before our Lord was crucified He frequently prayed pointing out those who believed in Him. ‘And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one’ John 17:22

The reason for our blessing is that the Church has kept His Word as previously by Christ. 17:6. They believed on Him, who was sent by God. As Christ was sent into the world we too will be sent into the world. 17:8. The blessings we are engendered with are from Christ, and similarly Israel will be blessed through us. As God resurrected Christ we likewise will be set free. After our rapture, we will be co-responsible for the redemption of Israel via the Word of God. Our Lord Jesus was entrusted with the Word on earth, and with His resurrection from the dead, His Word is given to us. We believe it and subsequently we are blessed, and if, in the near future, Israel does repent, we will be co-responsible as we preached His Word. We do not fully understand how it will come about, but we will certainly be involved in His plan.

After the rapture of the Church, we will be co-responsible with Christ for Israel’s security. Once Israel comes to repentance they in turn will fulfil their duty and become the firstborn among the nations. They will be responsible for reaching the remaining nations of the world with the Gospel. During Daniel’s 70th week, we will be endowed with this great responsibility, and we will fulfil our priestly duty doing that. We may assume that the priestly duty to reach Israel is entrusted to the two witnesses Rev. 11 as they are also mentioned in Zech. 4.

I believe that Moses and Elijah are the two witnesses, and in an unusual way they will be part of the Church. They do represent the Church’s duty who will preach the Word to Israel. If in the near future when Israel is troubled, we will fight for the interest of the believing remnant.

In Revelation 12, there is a vision of a woman (Israel) who is pregnant. We may question if Israel is pregnant, who will be born? The ‘one’ to be born is the Church or the son that is promptly snatched into heaven. We as the Church will rule the nations with a rod of iron. Rev. 12:5. In Psalm 2 that is attributed to Christ but in this Psalm we will rule the nations with Him. We are blessed in heaven with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Eph. 1:3–5; Rom. 8. If Christ is appointed as the Son, we too will be appointed as sons with Him in glory. When the woman or Israel escapes to the desert or Petra, we will be privileged with the task to share the Gospel with them. This remnant of God in the desert will be nourished in the desert by the Church for 3½ years, Rev. 12:6. It remains a secret as no-one in particular is mentioned. I am convinced that we as a nation of people (the son) will feed Israel (the mother) with possibly manna as of old.

Revelation 12 portrays the special relationship there is between Israel and the Church and Satan will not succeed to disrupt it. Our first duty in heaven will be the safety of the remnant in Petra, and their objective to evangelize the world will be ours too. We read of Michael and his band of angels Rev. 12:7 who will fight for Israel. Michael is the embodiment of Christ, and His angels are the Church. Unknown to many we are the ‘angels’ and Paul also called us as such. ‘But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come

to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly' Heb. 12:22
In the past and even today the angels are sent to protect us, and I believe that in the future the angels (who are us) will protect them, as well. We as the Church and the firstborn in Christ have a special relationship with Israel. Our firstborn duty will be realised in Israel. In the Old Testament, there is a different word to express the idea of a firstborn. It is to be a kinsman. In Hebrew, it is the word 'gaal.' Str. no. 1350.
In the history of Ruth, we read of the 'gaal' or the kinsman that is also translated as 'the redeemer.' The word is found 17 times in the Book of Ruth. Boaz was Ruth's kinsman or her firstborn and in the end he had the choice to redeem her. He had the opportunity, but he was not compelled to redeem her as such. Presently Christ is our 'gaal' as He redeemed us, and similarly in the future we as part of Christ's body will be the 'gaal' of Israel. Many argue that Israel was called to be the firstborn Exod. 4:22 and why is the Church also called the firstborn or the 'kinsman'?
Both Israel and the Church are the firstborn but on a different level. We have an option as Boaz, but I am certain that we will fulfil our duty. We may not be physically involved, but rather spiritually as the angels today inspire us in heaven. The angels do inspire us, but we are not conscious of their work within us. Heb. 13:2.
Our calling is far greater than Israel's. Jethro (Moses' father in law) instructed Moses to choose 70 elders to help him judge Israel. Exod. 18:13–23. Those 70 men are also a type of the Church, as we too will admonish and judge Israel. In the future, we may physically encourage Israel at Petra having the Word of God, but it may also be true on a spiritual level. I am sure that, on the day of the Lord, we will be seen with Christ on the Mount of Olives and also at Petra.
Early in the Church's history an Ethiopian eunuch read Isaiah 53 to himself, and he did not understand it. Philip was specially guided by an angel to explain the Words to the Ethiopian eunuch. He helped him, and he got saved. Acts 8:34. I believe in the future if any person during the great tribulation does enquire about the Word of God we will be there to unfold its truths. Paul said in the last verses of Rom. 16 v. 20 that Satan will be crushed beneath our feet. We may think that only Christ will do that, but us as part of His body will wedge Satan out from heaven. It says that Michael and his angels Rev. 12:7 will boot Satan out of heaven, but in fact they portray Christ with the Church. 'And they have conquered him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.' Rev. 12:11
'And they' portray the Church, who is Michael with his angels. They or we will conquer Satan because we are redeemed by the blood or the life of the Lamb. His life and Word is within us, and we did not love our life to death.
If it says the woman received two wings to escape into the desert, we ought to ask what does the two wings imply. The 'two wings' represent the Church. Previously we stressed that the Church is known as 'the two.' It is safe to say that we will accompany her to the desert as the wings convey a spiritual truth. The Church will guard the remnant of Israel at Petra. After the rapture of the Church, we will fulfil many duties. When later an angel

is seen entrusted with the eternal gospel, Rev. 14:6 we can conclude that they are the Church to preach the Gospel to the ends of the world. It remains a vision, but clearly the Church is envisaged. In short there was a special relationship between the ark, the priests who carried the ark, and Israel as a nation. The 10th of the 1st month

On the 10th of the 1st month Israel crossed the river, the same day and month as their exodus from Egypt. We are convinced of the 'day' but not of the 'year.' The 1st month or the month Nissan is a very important time in Israel's history as it was the time when they prepared themselves to leave Egypt. In Exodus 12 the Passover lamb was slain, and they had to smear its blood on their door posts. Ever since then it became Israel's 1st month. 12:2. On the 10th of each 1st month they had to take a lamb into their own homes until the 14th of the month. The next day (15th) they had to flee from Egypt and three days later on the 17th Nissan they crossed the Red Sea.

- On the 10th Nissan the history of Israel started when they took a lamb within their own homes. The word 10 is coupled with the Word of God as the 10 commandments that were given to Moses. The lamb is a picture of the Lord that dwelt amongst Israel. The 4 days until the 14th Nissan portray the 4 dispensations leading to the Law of Moses. On the 15th Nissan, they had to flee to traverse the Red Sea. There is a similar time structure at the time of our Lord's crucifixion and resurrection. Israel crossed the River Jordan on the 10th of Nissan, and it is exactly 40 years since Israel took the lamb into their own homes.
- Similarly on the 10th Nissan the Lord visited Israel when He rode on a colt descending down the Mount of Olives. As the 'lamb', they refused to accept Him and take Him within their home. He was rejected. It is written in Luke 19 where it says that the Jewish nation were unaware of 'their day,' v. 42 or the time of 'His visitation.' v. 44. Before our Lord descended down the Mount of Olives, He firstly visited Jericho and there He called Zacchaeus from the fig tree. From that place, He went to Bethany where Mary anointed His feet. John 12. After spending the night there, He went to the Mount of Olives. He rode on a colt, and when He descended down the Mount of Olives, a multitude of His disciples (and not the people in general) spread their garments in front of Him in adoration. v. 37. That annoyed the Pharisees, and they asked the Lord to rebuke His disciples, who praised God with the words of Psalm 118. This same Psalm mentions a stone v. 22 that will be given to the heathen since the Jewish nation rejected Him.
  The stone is Christ and since He is rejected by the religious leaders of its time, it will become the chief corner stone of His heavenly temple or His Church. Eph. 2. The Jewish nation persistently refused Him and after His resurrection He did build another temple. When He sat on the colt and close to Jerusalem, He observed the city from the mountain. He wept over the city: 'And when he was come near,

he beheld the city, and wept over it' Luke 19:41
He wept knowing that the city Jerusalem will be levelled to the ground. They were unaware of that 'day,' and the implications it will have on them as a nation. On that particular day, Zech. 9:9 was fulfilled and a less known Psalm 118. Moreover, that day ended the 69th week of Daniel. Dan. 9:24. Daniel says that until Messiah the Prince (and not the King) will be 69 weeks.
Our Lord Jesus rightfully inherited the title 'the Prince' as traced in Matt. 1. The disciples hoped that the Prince will be blessed and become their King on earth, as they were acquainted with this verse. They were saddened realising the effect Israel's disbelief will have on the nation as a whole. The Lord Jesus was 'cut off.' Dan. 9:26.
If the Prince is 'cut off' it implies that He will not receive His kingdom. Instead of being crowned with glory and honour, they cursed Him and placed a crown of thorns on His head. He was the slain Lamb, but He will be crowned. The Jewish nation rejected Him, but Simeon prophesied seeing the Lord Jesus as a baby, saying regardless of Israel's unbelief, God will call a people from amongst the Gentiles for His Name. Luke 2:32; Acts 15:14.
Descending down the mountain, the Lord Jesus said that not one stone will be left upon another. He quoted Daniel 9 as it was yet future. No triumphal entry awaited the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem, but He wept. However, He did enter Jerusalem and prophetically got rid of the traders in the temple, symbolising how one day He will cleanse Jerusalem. I believe the history of Joshua portrays our dispensation and unknowingly he is unfolding its truths. Presently Joseph, Ephraim or the Church is blessed instead of Judah or the Jewish nation. Our dispensation has come about after the Jewish nation rejected the Lord Jesus on the 10th Nissan. Since then we live in the break between the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel and our dispensation remains mysterious to the Jewish nation. When Israel was in Egypt, God freed them once they accepted the lamb into their own home and smeared its blood upon their doorpost. The people who refused did not enter the Land of Canaan and similarly if we don't accept Christ, we will never enter the heavenly Canaan. According to the Bible the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus remained largely unknown to its readers, but yet it was part of God's plan. Even Satan was ignorant of this, 1 Cor. 2:8 as it happened between the break of the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel, or the time of God's mystery.

- On the 10th of the 1st month Ezekiel stood on a high mountain and saw the new temple. Ezek. 40:1. At present, we are the new temple being built and the rejected stone did become the chief cornerstone. Similarly in future I believe there will be a physical temple on earth, but right now we are the spiritual temple in heaven. Since Israel crossed the Red Sea, their 7th month became their 1st month. Their 1st month is the month Nissan and their 7th month is the month Tishri. The Jewish New Year happens at equinox when the length of

day equals the nights. This occurs twice a year at spring and autumn. This is confusing to many as in Noah's time the New Year started at autumn but since Israel fled Egypt the New Year commenced at spring. Noah's ark touched the earth at Mount Ararat on the 17th of the 7th month, but if we reckon with the changes in the calendar it will be the 17th of the 1st month. It is the time when Israel crossed the Red Sea, or when Christ resurrected from the dead. There is a clear linkage between Israel's 1st and 7th month, as their feasts clearly portray great events. To summarise On the 10th of Nissan:

∗ The lamb was taken into the homes of the people;
∗ Israel crossed the River Jordan;
∗ It was the end of Daniel's 69th week;
∗ The Lord Jesus was rejected by the people when approaching Jerusalem;
∗ The cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem. 10th Tishri is exactly 6 months later and then we have:
∗ The great Day of Atonement.
∗ The inauguration of the temple under Solomon.
∗ The beginning of the Jubilee Lev. 25:9 symbolising the Millennium.
14th Nissan ∗ The lamb was slain on Passover day. 15th until the 21st Nissan
∗ The Feast of Unleavened Bread. 15th until the 21st Tishri
The Feast of Tabernacles. 22nd Nissan It was the 8th day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
22nd Tishri It was the 8th day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Similarly, our calendar has also changed by two months, and no one knows why. October is our tenth month, but the word means eight, or octo. September is our ninth month, but the word is tied to the number seven, and similarly November implies the number nine. December is our last month, and the word is tied to the number ten, or deci. Clearly, two months got lost in our calendar.
On the Jewish calendar, the tenth of the seventh month is a very important date, as then it is their Great Day of Atonement. It coincides with the tenth of the first month when Israel crossed the River Jordan. Much of Israel's history is locked in these two important dates.
Paul says that Christ had entered into the inner sanctuary for us, symbolising the time when the high priest went once a year into the Holiest. Later in the day, when the people did see Him, they knew that their sins were forgiven. We today experience the great Day of Atonement as Christ did enter the 'inner sanctuary' or heaven for us, and there He cleanses us from all our sins. We continue to live on that 'day' as He did not reappear. When, in the future, Israel does call on the name of the Lord, He will reappear and forgive their sins. That will coincide with their great Day of Atonement. We now enjoy the blessings of that 'great day', but in the future Israel will experience this historic day on the tenth of Tishri.

Daniel’s sixty-ninth week ended on the tenth of the first month, and Israel will come to repentance on the tenth of the seventh month, at the end of Daniel’s seventieth week. Now Israel is too stubborn to call on the name of Jehovah, but during the great tribulation they will call on His name. This will culminate with the great Day of Atonement. They were too stubborn to accept that Christ wished them peace at the end of Daniel’s sixty-ninth week:

‘If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!’ (Luke 19:42)

Jerusalem will be destroyed, but Israel will receive their Messiah and enter the peace of the new covenant. When our Lord walked down the slopes of the Mount of Olives, He wept, not because of His later crucifixion, but rather because He looked into the distant future (two thousand years later), knowing that Jerusalem would be levelled to the ground.

On the day when Israel repents, they will pray the prayer of Daniel and King Solomon. Both those prayers are long: Dan. 9:3–19; 1 Kings 8:22–53. Daniel interceded for Israel as the highest-ranking Jew of his time. Similarly, later in history, the highest-ranking Jew in the Knesset will intercede on behalf of his people, calling on His name. Christ will intercede on their behalf. When Solomon inaugurated the temple on the tenth of the seventh month, he prayed as the king of the people, realising that later the people would be unfaithful to the Lord. Both prayers will be on the lips of the future repentant Israel.

The disciples of the Lord quoted and were familiar with the prophetic message of Psalm 118. Similarly, in future, the people of Israel will cite this psalm, honouring its truths. At that time, the countries of the world will swarm around them like bees (Ps. 118:12), thinking they will defeat Israel, but surely He will cut them off. The stone previously rejected by the builders (Ps. 118:22) will become the chief cornerstone.

Following Israel’s repentance, they will share in the Feast of Trumpets, denoting the Millennium. This will culminate with the feast of the first month, and the dissimilarity between the first and the seventh month of Israel’s history will vanish.

‘The Lord told Joshua, “Today I will begin to make you great in the eyes of all the Israelites”’ (Joshua 3:7). The Lord exalted Joshua, and today we can imagine the great glory Christ will endow to the newly reborn Israel, who were devastated.

The monument at Gilgal is a remembrance of the work God has done for Israel. It will caution Israel and the surrounding nations. The stones will articulate God’s strong hand over them. It says that the hearts of the kings of Canaan melted when they realised God’s strong hand amongst them (Joshua 5:1).

Joshua 5

At Gilgal, each man in Israel was circumcised, as it had not been practised during their sojourn in the desert. God commanded Abraham to circumcise newborn sons on the eighth day, but at Gilgal they were circumcised as adults. For thirty-eight years, Israel meandered across the

desert in unbelief, and they died in the desert except for Joshua and Caleb. The Lord made them meander across the desert because of their stubbornness, and today we can learn from their mistakes.

‘Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, “They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways. ” So I swore in My wrath, “They shall not enter My rest”’ (Heb. 3:8–11).

Because of their unbelief, they were never circumcised. Since Joshua came into command, we are dealing with a new generation, and they had to be circumcised.

Today many Christians believe that circumcision is for hygienic purposes, thinking it has no spiritual significance. They frequently quote that when Israel was in the desert, God idly planned for them to be circumcised. That is wrong, as to Israel circumcision is nothing new, and it was practised four hundred and thirty years earlier, long before Israel wandered through the desert. Circumcision was not practised in the desert, disappointing those who think it will benefit them. On the contrary, we will find that circumcision has only symbolic importance, and it is pointless, having no hygienic value. Being circumcised will not make us an Israelite.

Paul says: ‘For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly’ (Rom. 2:28). Circumcision can only be noticed once a person is stripped. I find it difficult to believe it is an icon to brand the Jewish nation. Circumcision is most prevalent in Muslim countries and Israel, and it is practised in several African tribal groups.

Today the Muslims practise circumcision at the age of thirteen years, honouring the circumcision of Ishmael.

In this chapter, circumcision was practised afresh, even though Abraham was the first to practise it. When Israel were placed under the laws of Moses, they were not circumcised for forty years, but after being reborn, they had to be. Today the ten lost tribes are not duly concerned with circumcision, and it is difficult to ascertain whether Israel adhered to this practice in the Old Testament or not. Many believe that once the Jewish nation was in the Babylonian exile, they strictly practised this. When studying circumcision, we need to study Genesis 17:2–14. The Lord told Abraham that, via the circumcision, He would establish His covenant between Himself and ‘his seed’. This chapter often quotes the covenant, and this will be realised via Sarah or her son Isaac (17:19, 21). Isaac is a type of Christ and also of a ‘multitude of people’. The ‘multitude of people’ can be the Church today, or the future reborn Israel during the great tribulation. Isaac will steer the people to the better promise. That is the reason why both Sarah and Abraham laughed. Sarah laughed for joy, as the message of the three men was utterly unexpected. Nothing can trigger a better response for laughter than the unforeseen. We can also laugh, as we have a God who, for no apparent reason, helped us out of our misery, giving us eternal life. And above all, He even placed us in heaven, making us co-heirs with Christ. What can be more startling than that? Many find it absurd that God can enhance us to such a great level. Even Abraham, being nearly one hundred years old, fell on his face and rolled in

laughter, realising the blessings he did not deserve (17:17). Isaac is translated as ‘laughter’, as Sarah said: ‘God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me’ (Gen. 21:6). In Genesis 17, the word covenant is mentioned thirteen times, and the sign of this covenant (v. 11) is the circumcision. Circumcision has to do with procreation, and when this happens, the prepuce is naturally retracted with copulation. At that time, there is no prepuce or foreskin to hinder fertility. To rid the prepuce symbolises fertility and abundance of seed. It is a sign of things happening presently in our Church. Circumcision does not identify the Jewish nation as a whole, and neither does it boost our hygienic demands.

The next question is: of which covenant is the circumcision a sign? There are many covenants in the Bible, and all of them are not similar. Circumcision has nothing to do with the old covenant or the laws of Moses. Moses did elaborate on the circumcision, and the Lord also spoke of it. He asked the Pharisees why He offended them when He healed the sick on the Sabbath day, when they practised circumcision on the Sabbath day. That is true if the eighth day overlaps the Sabbath day. The Lord Jesus sneered at them, as they were ignorant of its meaning, not realising that it is tied to the promises God made with Abraham. Circumcision is a sign, and it implies that the old will be thrown away. The old is the law and the Jewish religious ceremonies. Today the Jewish nation is recognised by their traditions, the law and the circumcision. The circumcision stands apart, as it is a sign of the new covenant, and it was given to Abraham even before there was any mention of the law of Moses. The new covenant replaces the old covenant but fulfils the promises of Abraham. There is a bond between the promises God made to Abraham and the Church. Once the law of Moses was dealt with by the death and resurrection of Christ, we have an open door to the new

What I mean is this: The law, introduced four hundred and thirty years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise’ (Gal. 3:17). In short, Paul says that the promises of Abraham will be triggered once the law is done away with. Hebrews 9 has a similar message: the law stands alone, and once it is done away with through Christ’s resurrection, we are invited to the riches of the new covenant. Eternal life will emanate from the new covenant, as circumcision is tied to the promises of this new life. The prepuce or the covering is done away with, and likewise, once the restrictive nature of the old covenant or the law is done away with. The old is oppressive and needs to vanish, as the flesh prevents us from discerning the spiritual values. The law is a covering, and by no means can circumcision label the law with its cladding. The prepuce smothers life, and once gone, the excitement of the new life or covenant will surface. Our faces are not veiled, and we can discern His glory.

‘But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory’ (2 Cor. 3:18).

We may ask why Abraham was so special. The reason is that he believed in God who can create new life, and it was the bastion of his faith. He

believed in eternal life, and the source of this new life is cherished with the circumcision. The good news is that the Lord was mocked at the cross, bearing all the possible curses relating to the laws of Moses. We are free, as He rose triumphantly from the cartel of the law. We who are liberated in Him. It is clearly pictured with our baptism, as the old did vanish in the water, but the new life ascended with Christ. The Lord Jesus was circumcised and also baptised by John, symbolising the way any person has to follow. It says:
'When He had been baptised, Jesus came up immediately from the water' (Matt. 3:16).
He 'immediately' rose from the water, illustrating that no power would keep Him in the abyss.
God told Abraham that he needed to circumcise his offspring on the eighth day. The letter eight is part of the 'new', and it is outside the scope of our world of 'sevens'. Through whatever symbolism in the Bible, it always portrays a simple truth: that we are freed through rebirth and that everything has become new to us (2 Cor. 5:17).
The Lord rose on the first day of the week (eighth day), and I am sure it was at crack of dawn. He is the first to be part of the new covenant, and that is the reason why He was circumcised and baptised.
Strangely, Paul allowed Timothy to be circumcised, as he was tormented by the quibbling Jews. Once he was circumcised, he was allowed to teach in their synagogues. To the Jews, Paul was a Jew, and to the Romans he was a Roman.
God never condemned the nation of Israel by their not being circumcised. That is true in Joshua's time and even later in Israel's history. However, He was annoyed when they refused to appreciate the real meaning of circumcision. Multiple times in the law of Moses, God told Israel to circumcise their hearts.
'Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked' (Deut. 10:16).
Our heart cannot be circumcised, but in this verse God wants to reflect the real meaning of the word circumcision. God expects us to get rid of the covering or the unbelief that shields our heart. As long as our heart is covered with disbelief, no new life is possible. New life is possible once we have got rid of the 'old' that used to smother the 'new'. Our foreskin needs to be gone, as our new life is showing. We need to agree that our previous hardened heart, which was tainted by disbelief, has changed. We are susceptible to God's Word, and any person who refuses the free flow of His Word is equated to a stiff-necked people (Deut. 10:16). It is a matter of our heart, and not our hands. Israel was once blessed by being the 'people of God', but they abused their privileged position by being stiff-necked. If our lives are saturated with His Word, it will permeate our bodies, and then we will do the works pleasing to Him. We and Israel need to listen, and we can fulfil the laws of Moses not with our hands, but rather with our hearts. In the Old Testament, God inspired Israel not to continually work with their hands, as it can do them no good.
'If you will return, O Israel,' says the Lord, 'return to Me; if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, then you shall not be moved. …

For thus says the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: “Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts”’ (Jer. 4:1–4).

Israel had to get rid of the ‘abominations’ or their unbelief, as it shields them from God (v. 1). Moreover, Jeremiah spurred them to stop ploughing the land and to allow the land to lie fallow. By ploughing the fields, they run the risk that the thorns will smother the good seeds. Their hard work will be futile. Working the earth and breaking the clods will never produce sufficiently. Our works or the fruit of the law can merely produce thorns. That is vividly portrayed with our Lord’s death, when the people placed a crown of thorns on His head. That is how His life ended, but He brought an end to the curse of the law. The law can create nothing better than thorns. Our effort as part of the flesh will be futile. Satan will spoil them, as in the parable of the sower.

We need to get rid of the ‘foreskin’ of our hearts or the ‘old’, whether it is the laws of Moses or the works of our flesh. If we allow His light to flood our lives, we will be changed to His likeness. The law or the foreskin needs to be done away with, and then we will procreate. Paul refers to the Old Testament and motivates us to be circumcised of the heart and not of our flesh (Rom. 2:28–29). The real circumcision is a matter of our heart. It is not a physical act but rather a spiritual one. To receive honour from God is not to be circumcised by the body but by the Spirit. With the death of Christ, He made an end of all the curses of the law, and besides, they will never be mentioned again. We are as free as a bird in the sky, and in no way do we need to succumb to its rule. Paul warns the believers not to surrender to the dogs or the evil workers who practise the circumcision or the laws of Moses.

‘Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision’ (Phil. 3:2–3).

Paul warns the readers to be wary of the dogs, evil workers and the mutilators, for all of them are alike. It implies that they all are tied to the shameful works of the old creation or Judaism. We, as part of the new, are the true circumcision and worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh.

In practice, circumcision is a dangerous surgical procedure. Unskilled hands can remove more than the foreskin! The people who are bodily circumcised are seen as the mutilated and, as a result, they are rendered impotent and infertile. Circumcision depicts fertility, but here they are made impotent. Paul says that the Jewish nation is cursed with their ‘circumcision’, as the knife did slip, and the nation is now rendered infertile. Paul had all the reasons to be confident in the flesh, but when he compared them to the blessings he received in Christ, they are worthless. Paul used to boast in the seven blessings he received as part of the circumcision. He described them as:

- circumcised on the eighth day;
- of the people of Israel;
- of the tribe of Benjamin;
- a Hebrew born of Hebrews;
- as to the law, a Pharisee;

- as to zeal, a persecutor of the church;
- as to righteousness under the law, blameless (Phil. 3:5–6).

This ‘circumcision’ made Paul boastful and a persecutor of the Church. Now many Christians argue that the above virtues are honourable, but to God they are a stumbling block. Paul wrote this letter as a Roman citizen living inside a Roman jail. He needed to learn that his admirable qualities stifled him. True life is to acquaint ourselves with the resurrected life of Christ and to discard our flesh or our foreskin.

Before Joshua and the people of Israel were allowed to enter the land of Canaan, they had to get rid of the ‘old’. All the blessings we were endowed with, thinking they are desirable to the world, are fruitless. They will weigh us down. We are complete in Christ, and if we do rely on any of our virtues, they will certainly encumber us.

In Christ, we are complete (Col. 2:9–14), and whatever blessing we receive is totally dependent on His work done within our bodies. We, as part of the Church—His body—are the circumcision. This is not done by our surgical skills but rather by purging the desires of our flesh. The old is forgotten and discarded, and being found part of the ‘new’, we are esteemed as complete. The circumcision of Christ (Col. 2:10–11) is not the circumcision of the Lord Jesus on the eighth day. The circumcision mentioned here was accomplished via His death and resurrection, when He redeemed our bodies. When we were buried with Him in His death, we did rise as part of His resurrected body. The old is buried, and Paul was aware that the circumcision and the baptism conveyed the same significance. The old (and whatever it may be) needs to be discarded to allow the free flow of the new. Our flesh will achieve nothing, and all the glory we will receive is totally dependent on Christ’s work and the free flow of His Spirit within our mortal bodies. The law, with all its curses, is nailed to the cross and at best it needs to be forgotten. Our ‘covering’ is buried in the deepest waters, and it will never surface again. Paul argues that the circumcision and the foreskin are nothing (1 Cor. 7:18–19; Gal. 5:6), as it is tied to the old. We value the new covenant or the Word of God that will endure for all eternity.

From the flint stones, the people had to create knives to circumcise themselves. Some assume they lived in the ‘Stone Age’ and had no choice, having no surgical instruments. There was a reason to use natural stone, as the stone portrays the works of Christ. Stone is natural, in contrast to bricks and mortar that are made from clay. They portray our works. Natural stone—whether it is a mountain, boulders, rocks or precious stones—describes the work of God through Christ. The stone that was rejected has become the chief cornerstone. Christ is our rock, and this saying is cited many times in the Psalms, as He is our strength and our place of refuge. Together, the rock and the stone are mentioned numerous times in our Bible. That is vividly portrayed in the history of David, who had five stones, but he used only the ‘one’ to slay Goliath. Similarly, in the book of Daniel ch. 2, a stone is mentioned that pulverised the kingdoms of the earth to dust. The image in this chapter resembles all the kingdoms of the earth, and the small stone that appeared from heaven, falling on the

toes of the image, is Christ Himself. This ‘stone’ did fill our earth, and it portrays Christ’s kingdom enveloping our complete heaven and earth. Isaac was known by the many wells, but the history of Jacob evolved around the ‘stone’. With his head resting against the ‘stone’, he had a dream, and at that ‘rock’ his name was changed from Jacob to Israel. He realised the importance of the stone, and he knew it symbolised the risen Christ. Israel took the stone which he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it (Gen. 28:18). This brings to mind the obelisk or the monolith standing in many of our great cities that portray Christ as the anointed. When Jacob had the first glimpse of his wife Rachel, he single-handedly rolled the stone from the mouth of the well to give her sheep water. The stone was very heavy and usually needed many shepherds to roll it, but here Jacob did it himself, equalling the power of Samson. The well had to be covered by the stone when not used to drink from. Jacob gave the sheep water to drink ahead of their usual time. We, as part of the Church, can enjoy the ‘Word of God’ or the effervescent water ahead of Israel, who is still waiting.

Similarly to Mary Magdalene, who rose early in the morning to embalm her Lord’s body, she needed someone to roll away the stone to allow her to enter the tomb. On that morning, the impossible happened, and the Bible is not clear how it came about. We may ask ourselves if an angel did not walk past quietly at crack of dawn.

The rolling away of the stone represents rebirth, and the question Mary asked—who will roll away the stone?—is comparable to the question: who will raise Him from the dead? At dawn, they discovered that the stone had rolled away and that the tomb was empty.

In the book of Joshua, we read the following:

‘Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’ So the place has been called Gilgal to this day (Josh. 5:9).

Gilgal means ‘to roll’—a wheel or rebirth. Until today, the word has a similar meaning, denoting rebirth or reincarnation, a word used by Satan. Reincarnation means ‘to become flesh again’, but rebirth has a far greater implication, as we are born again, not being part of the flesh but rather as part of the ‘Spirit’. Nicodemus in John 3 realised the meaning of the word rebirth. He knew he had to be reborn, not via his mother but rather via the Father or God Himself, who is the Spirit. Through this rebirth, we are eternal and part of the unseen. We can hear the wind howling, but we cannot see it with our eyes.

Gilgal in Hebrew can be written as Gl-Gl, as the Hebrew language knows no vowels such as ‘i’ and ‘a’. Gl means a heap or a rolling heap of stones. During a very stressful period in Jacob’s life, when he left Laban his father-in-law, he made a heap of stones as a monument. He called the place Galeed, meaning a ‘heap of witness’ (Gen. 31:47). Gilgal has a similar root word, but it is repeated. In essence, the same word is spoken twice, denoting rebirth, as its principal meaning appears twice. At birth, we were born of the flesh; yet after accepting Christ, we were born again the second time, not via our mother but by the ‘spirit’ or God Himself.

Whenever we read in the Bible of a wheel, we must think of rebirth, as in the book of Ezekiel. The cycle or the turning of the wheel depicts our life,

and going through one cycle clearly reflects our life with all its phases, starting from infancy. At the end of our life, the wheel completes its one cycle, but it has taken us to a different place. If we accept Christ, we will be part of heaven.

When Israel entered the Promised Land, they left behind the vices of the desert and entered a new cycle. The ‘reproach of Egypt’ (Josh. 5:9) is forgotten. If we wish to be part of God’s promises, as with Israel who entered the Promised Land, we need to be reborn, and this is clearly illustrated at Gilgal with our spiritual circumcision in Christ. From Gilgal, the land of Canaan will be conquered.

Gilgal differs from Galgal (wheel) only in a single vowel. The consonants are the same. When suffixed with a Tav and Aleph (the first and last letters in the Hebrew alphabet), it forms the word Golgotha. At Golgotha, Christ in a single day rolled away the reproach of our sin (Zech. 3:9). Zechariah quoted the words of Joshua, as Christ alone can accomplish this redemption. The word Golgotha is translated in Greek as the place of a skull. A skull is curved and rounded, making it roll easily, implying rebirth. Our rebirth is via our intellect, our heart or our spirit. Close to Golgotha, He rose from the dead, by a distance of only a stone’s throw away. The term rebirth is hidden in the stone, or the rolling of the stone.

While the children of Israel were in Gilgal, they observed the Passover on the fourteenth day of Nisan. They ate the Passover lamb whilst standing. As the Egyptians saw the Israelites eating it hastily, similarly the people of Jericho saw them eating the Passover lamb as a witness against them. On the next day, on the fifteenth of Nisan, they had the Feast of Unleavened Bread and parched grain. That was the first day of the feast. Then the manna stopped falling, as officially they had entered the land, as depicted by their circumcision, eating the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed. Slaying the Passover lamb may resemble the death of the Lord Jesus, but the eating of the lamb has nothing to do with His death on the night of the fourteenth of Nisan. To eat is to live, and our entire life is reflected upon as eating. We can eat and enjoy everything, but we only need to retain the things that are good for us. Eating and enjoying the good is to enjoy our life (Eccl. 3:13). The eating of the Passover lamb is life, and eating while standing the lamb is an illustration of life. From the seventeenth onwards, Israel feasted on the new grain of the Promised Land. This again is a picture of the new life in the Promised Land that came on the seventeenth!

It says: ‘and thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s Passover’ (Exod. 12:11). Our loins girded denotes life and procreation, and similarly the staff. Rebirth and life are portrayed by the eating. The door, on which the blood was smeared, is the hole in the wall. That reminds us that the life of the Passover lamb is on the door. Christ is the living door, as quoted in John 14:6. We need to enter that door, as the living door will ensure us eternal life. The lamb was slain but lives via the door, and anyone can enter it. Continually in the Bible, we are confronted with rebirth or death and the resurrection. Following the fourteenth of Nisan, they had the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. The lamb

disappeared, and nothing of it was allowed to remain until the next day. During the feast, only the wine and the bread remained, being reminiscent of life. We can enjoy this, as the leaven did disappear. The old is gone, and everything has become new since we are part of His resurrected life
And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain' (Josh. 5:11).
Parched grain is unleavened bread, and it is the produce the land had to offer. The desert cannot sustain them, unlike the land of Canaan. The corn was parched from the previous year, as they entered the land of Canaan. It was too early for them to enjoy the fresh produce of the land. From the fourteenth to the twenty-first of Nisan, they were only allowed to eat unleavened bread. We can enjoy life as part of the new, as the old man has vanished. Our battle is not in the 'flesh' but it involves the 'spirit' (2 Cor. 10:3). We do not fight this battle with our own flesh, as portrayed by the leavened bread. Our battle is far greater, involving the spiritual powers. Thus, the spiritual portrays the unleavened bread, illuminating our glorified position in Christ. Once we have accepted Christ, we are part of the spiritual, and the leaven or yeast has no hold on us. The unleavened bread and the wine clearly describe our new life in Him.
'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened' (1 Cor. 5:7).
In Luke 12, the Lord Jesus talked about the leaven that He likened to the religious leaders of His day.
'Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy' (v. 1). Hypocrisy is having double standards: to do the things they tell other people not to do. Leaven is not the gospel, as some may think. The Lord warned the disciples against the teachings of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who prayed at the street corners. The Lord was more concerned about the 'daily bread', as He alone can provide this (Matt. 16:5–12). The Lord told them that He was not concerned about what they had to eat, as He provided them with the bread and even the fish on four occasions. Being the bread of life, He was capable of supplying them freely with it. He warned His disciples to be wary of the leaven of the religious leaders and their false doctrines. The leaven has a clear negative connotation, as it is the teachings of men that are in conflict with God. Human philosophy is leaven, and it originates from man and not from God. Pharisees are expected to remain true to God's teachings, but they don't. They prefer to be true to the teachings of their 'fathers' or the Talmud, construing their own way of thinking. An example today are the many church leaders who favour the teachings of their fathers (e. g. Luther) than to remain faithful to God's Word. They esteem the teachings of the old church leaders in preference to the simple truths in the Bible. Christ's simple message of grace is shunned in preference to the teaching of the law. It is impossible to maintain the teachings of the law and grace at the same time. Many church leaders think they are true to the Scriptures, but realistically they are not, and that is hypocrisy.
To the other extreme, the Sadducees scorn the idea of any resurrection and disregard any miracles or the working of demons. They merely believe in the things they can 'see', and amongst themselves they discern

what the words of God are. They will not be swayed by it or allow it to govern their lives. Whether we are bitten by a cat or a dog makes no difference. Any of their teachings will lead us astray.
We considered the leaven of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but the Lord also warned us of the leaven of Herod (Mark 8:15). King Herod was seen as the leader of a Jewish sect. In essence, they waited for the Messiah, and they thought that God's promises in the Old Testament would be achieved via Herod the Edomite. To them, he was a Jew and their king, thinking he could satisfy their thirst for their own Jewish ideology. He was the acclaimed king of the Jews when Pilate sneered at the Lord Jesus during His crucifixion. Pilate did send the Lord Jesus to Herod, as he was their acclaimed king. Mockingly, he ridiculed our Lord's titles. Via the lineage of King Herod or the politics, they believed that the promises of the Millennium would be realised in them. Zionists today believe they have the means to assure God's promises. King Herod failed them miserably, ignoring their plea, as shortly afterwards they were led into the Egyptian exile. Today many Christians believe that politics will speed their entry into the Millennium. Christian politics cannot suffice, as we are drawn out of this present evil world. Via politics, God will never bless our world, as the one opposes the other. Via the teachings of the law, we will never govern the world, as the leaven opposes the simple truths of God's grace.
Teaching the simple truths ought to be our main objective, and trying to overthrow the evil powers is senseless.
We can fight for our human rights, but in essence we lost them when we forfeited ours in exchange for the 'new'. It is disheartening to me to find so many Christians fighting for their privileges. To seek power is to exercise our control of the law, and today the world regards grace as a weakness, and that will never boost us. We can enjoy the freedom and do whatever seems right to us, but if we are swayed by the teaching of men, it will smother our freedom.
In Galatians 5:7, we read of the 'leaven' that can easily spoil the dough. Paul prompts us to remain standing in the freedom Christ has given us and not be yoked again by the law. This will steer us away from grace that earmarks our present dispensation. The law or the circumcision will hinder God's work within our lives. To allow the law is to allow the yeast to enter the whole lump of dough. Whoever persuaded them to follow the law is not from the One who called them to grace (5:8).
Many regard the teaching of the law as part of the gospel. If we welcome the principles of the law, thinking it can smooth Christ's kingdom on earth, then the works of the law will prove to be the 'little leaven' to choke all our efforts.
In principle, the world regards us as a people entangled with the ideology of the ten laws of Moses, with all the 'do' and 'don't do'. We don't need to create the impression that we treasure them, as we are redeemed from them. On the contrary, the world is subjected by them, as their lives are branded by the many laws. We live in freedom and need to get rid of the old leaven of yesterday. Starting the day with the old will certainly boost Satan. The old will drag us down.

The two pillars of Satan are the law and sin, and they both will collapse. Our religious system is inspired by them, whether it is modern-day Christianity or the Muslim faith. This is true, as bread with a little leaven tastes better. On the contrary, God sees us as new and not spoiled by the leaven. Once we get rid of the 'old', Christ can work within us. The leaven enhances the works of the flesh, as Paul explained it simply in Galatians 5. Those people living under its monarchy will end up devouring and fighting each other.

The leaven or the yeast that 'blows up' is not our doing, and we need to treasure sincerity and truth. We do live in the land of Canaan, and our norms are different. Joshua snubbed his enemies, and he conquered them mockingly. He merely walked around the city of Jericho, and their walls plummeted. Our human reasoning will not profit us, as it harbours hypocrisy. If we forsake the old or the yeast, Christ will make something of our lives.

The Lord once said the kingdom of heaven is likened to leaven (Matt. 13:33). The leaven mentioned here is thought to be a picture of the kingdom of heaven and good. This is wrong, as this leaven infiltrated and spoiled three measures of meal. All the parables of the Bible discern the hidden issues regarding our dispensation, and that parable is no exception. Now our world and the heavens, including the stars we see, are spoiled by Satan. Today Christ's kingdom is confined in heaven. After Christ's resurrection, He did not claim His kingdom, and He allowed the leaven to spoil the batch. Satan did this in secret, and that is the mystery spoken of in the book of Revelation.

'And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of the earth's abominations"' (Rev. 17:5).

That was done quietly in the dark of night, at the beginning of our dispensation. The woman, the whore or Babylon, hid the leaven in the three measures of meal. The world is naive and incapable of discerning her secrets. After Christ's resurrection, He turned a blind eye to our worldly affairs, and He even allowed the yeast to completely permeate the bread. The kingdom of the world or our Christendom is leavened by its many laws. Previously, we read of the three measures of bread. Abraham prepared them for God, as it was meant for Him (Gen. 18:6). They were unleavened, but today the three measures are spoiled by the woman. The only bread our world has to offer is the many 'religions'. The yeast makes us believe that our world is blessed by its many laws. On the contrary, it is spoiled. Today the theologians believe that the previous promises that were entrusted to Abraham by God are fulfilled by Moses. They argue that they are one and the same. They taint the message of God's grace with its many stifling laws to try and inhibit our freedom. The leaven has no positive connotations, and by integrating the message of the law with grace will certainly blind us. Our promises will be entered not via 'Herod', the politics or our church leaders, as they all signify the leaven. Our weaponry remains unseen, and it is spiritual, depending merely on God's unspoiled grace.

The Lord appeared to Joshua before the real battle began. In the earlier verses of this chapter, we are familiar with the typology that relates

directly to our present dispensation. It is the crossing of the river Jordan, leaving behind the reproach of Egypt, the circumcision, the Passover and eating the unleavened bread. The leaven being acid and from 'yesterday,' has to do with our sinful disposition. By eating the unleavened bread, we separate ourselves from the world and all its philosophies. Their ideology will encumber us in a worldly battle. The manna that stopped falling resembles the Word of God. It is the promises God made to Abraham regarding the new creation and eternal life. Under Joshua, those promises materialize even though it was not definite. It foreshadowed God's final promises to us. Early in our dispensation these truths were made known to Peter, Stephen and Paul. They quoted the Old Testament and declared how His promises were fulfilled in the New Testament. The New Testament speaks of the 'better promises' even though we need to wait in anticipation.

'The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call' (Acts 2:39). We are born from God, and once we are finally appointed as sons, we will be a total part of them (Heb. 8:6). When the manna stopped falling, and Israel enjoyed the fruit of the land, they literally entered His promises.
When Joshua was alone, preparing himself for the approaching battle, he saw a 'Man' with a sword. Luckily, the Bible translators agree that He was no ordinary person, as they wrote His name in capital letters. Joshua, representing the people, had a personal encounter with 'Him'.
'And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand' (Josh. 5:13).
The 'Man', who was thought to be like 'one of us', does not suggest that He was a descendant from Adam. Three times it says that Joshua saw the Man, stressing the importance of this meeting with God. It is difficult to grasp that even though physically He looked like one of us, He was nonetheless God. That is a problem for most of us. The Man remained mysterious, and besides, He also carried a sword. If it was the Lord, why did He appear in such a terrifying way?
Joshua had great courage as he approached Him, asking whether He was fighting against Israel or for them. He told Joshua that He was the Lord of hosts, and suddenly Joshua realised who He was, and he worshipped Him. There are many questions related to this short meeting, and looking back we may feel it was pointless. Joshua then removed his shoes from his feet, and we are not sure whether he put them on again.
Joshua needed this reassurance, as he realised that soon afterwards he would be involved in a difficult battle. Similarly, today we too are caught in a battle, and if we wish to conquer Satan, we need to have a special bond with our Lord. Joshua was subservient to His Lord when falling face down to the ground. Similarly, we need to ask the Lord, as Joshua did: 'What says my lord unto his servant?' In this battle, we need to humble ourselves before the Lord. As Joshua did, we need to have a meek spirit and acquaint ourselves with Him in our daily battles.

On several occasions, our Lord did appear as a ‘Man’, and especially in the history of Abraham. Many Christians today believe that the angels had wings to fly with, as with the cherubs on the ark, but the wings are mere symbolism. The saints, as portrayed by the Roman Catholic fathers, had a halo above their heads, and we can recognise them as such in their paintings. Similarly, they believed the angels had wings, and the Apostle Peter always had a bunch of keys around his neck. The keys were entrusted to him by the Lord, but they have a spiritual connotation. It is easy to recognise the saints or the apostles in the stained-glass images of many churches, as it aided the illiterate people to understand our Bible. This misconstruction should not lure us into thinking that the angels had wings.

The ‘Man’ looked like an ordinary human being, and that is why Joshua had the courage to ask him whether he was fighting for them or if he was a spy sent by their enemy.

The term ‘the angel of the Lord’ entails that He is a heavenly being and a messenger sent by God. He is known by the name Jehovah, and if He wished to remain anonymous, He would have preferred to be known as ‘the unknown’. Indeed, once the unknown God has revealed Himself by speaking to the prophets or in this chapter to Joshua, He is known by that name. The patriarchs and the prophets inquired many times what His name was, and He eagerly gave it to them. Even without being asked, He gave them His name. God wants to commune with us, and we have the freedom to call on Him. Whenever a person had a brief encounter with the Lord Jehovah, their remembrance of what they experienced – e. g. what they saw or heard – is to experience the countenance of God, and we are no exception. ‘The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace’ (Num. 6:24–26). Truly, they could have been the words written by the Apostle Paul.

Jehovah, who appeared to us, did commune with us as an angel of the Lord or as an angel of His countenance. God did appear to Moses, and he saw His ‘back part’ (Exod. 33:23). I believe it was His outward manifestation that included His character, and not only His ‘back’. It may give the wrong impression that God willingly turned His back on him. Moses saw the countenance of God, or Jehovah, as later cited in the Bible. Jehovah did appear to Joshua as a ‘Man’ and not as a burning bush, as when Moses saw Jehovah.

God is also known as ‘His Messenger’, as in the book of Malachi (3:1). It could have been John the Baptist, but we discovered that the prophecy is fulfilled by our Lord.

Then we also know Him as the Angel of the Covenant, the One who speaks to us, making a treaty with us, as with our father Abraham.

God did concern Himself with us. The previously unknown God did make Himself known, and besides, we can commune with Him.

Now the theologians call the appearance of the ‘Man’ to Joshua a theophany, a manifestation of God, or a Christophany, a manifestation of Christ. It is the visible appearance of God in the Old Testament. Once, God and two angels visited Abraham. He invited them to come into his house,

and he and Sarah entertained them (Gen. 18). Jacob wrestled with what appeared to be a ‘man’, but in fact He was fighting God (Gen. 32:22–30). Some argue that whenever someone had a visit like Abraham or Jacob, it was, in fact, the pre-incarnate Christ. This confuses many, not knowing whether the Man was God or the reincarnated Christ. If we are not caught in the concept of the ‘trinity’, it is easy to assume that they are one. There is no need to distinguish them, as I believe they are one and the same.
It is difficult for many to understand why it was essential for God to be born like us, from the lineage of Adam at Bethlehem. He made Himself known to many in the Old Testament, and why again at Bethlehem? God willingly made Himself known to us in a different appearance. The unknown God, who is known by the name of Jehovah or the Man who appeared to Joshua, is the One to be born at Bethlehem.
Even though He was God, He did not demand and cling to His rights as God. He emptied Himself, by taking on the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:6–7). Jehovah did empty Himself to become similar to us in every possible way.
With His birth, He is known as Jesus of Nazareth, and to assume that Jesus is the absolute image of God is erroneous. If God had to reveal Himself today, would He appear as a baby in a manger? That is wrong, as His previous humiliation did end with His resurrection. When our Lord was on earth, He was not called Jehovah, but rather by the name Jehoshua or Jesus. God became flesh and dwelt amongst us. He became man and was born of the flesh (John 3:6). When the Lord Jesus was on earth during the time of His flesh, He was not in the countenance of God He used to be in. There is a difference between the Jehovah appearing to Joshua and the Lord Jesus born at Bethlehem.
Satan sensed the humiliation He had, and he thought he had the upper hand and even promised the Lord the kingdoms of the world that legally belonged to Satan, as God had forfeited them. Nonetheless, the demons remained wary, realising our Lord’s real deity on earth, knowing He was no ordinary person.
‘And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!” And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ’ (Luke 4:41).
Our Lord Jesus became flesh (Heb. 5:7) and was tempted like any of us. He was God and yet man, and that made Him unique. Some may argue that He had greater qualities than us on earth, as He did miracles. I doubt this, as Moses and Elijah also did many miracles and spoke the words of God. What made Him so different is that even though He was encumbered with all our weaknesses, He never sinned. Peter prompted us to follow His steps (1 Pet. 2:21), and that would have been impossible if He chose to remain God on earth. He was tempted as we are, and temptation is only possible if we are not acquainted with the future. The greater our concern for the future, the more vulnerable we are to temptations. We realise our world is vulnerable, and therefore the uncertainties do not need to disturb us. By subjecting ourselves to God, we will not be lured away by Satan and his many temptations. Our Lord was tempted as we are, but He lived a life totally dependent on the Word of God. He had our emotions, and He

reckoned with our weaknesses. Our emotions make us vulnerable, and our Lord had them as well, which embraces both joy and anguish.
During our Lord's sojourn on earth, His deity was in crisis. Satan often tempted our Lord, but he was caught unaware when Christ rose from the dead (1 Cor. 2:8). As in a game of chess, God forfeited His 'pieces', and Satan fell for the gambit.
The name Christ was given to Him since He rose from the dead (Rom. 1:4). The Bible teaches us that the same Jesus who emptied Himself to become like one of us was greatly exalted and was given a name above any other name. This name can only be God Jehovah (Phil. 2:9). Christ reflects God's glory and fully personifies His magnificence.
'In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world' (Heb. 1:1–2).
Christ is the 'Father of lights' (James 1:17), and the light is the Word of God.
He is the exact image of God (2 Cor. 4:4).
The Apostle Peter said in his first sermon:
'Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord (Jehovah) and Christ' (Acts 2:36).
Christ will memorise His life on earth, with all its experiences, that includes the scars in both His hands and feet. Before our Lord's resurrection, He never claimed to have appeared to Abraham, but since His resurrection He did.
The Lord Jesus on earth unified with God Jehovah on the morning of His resurrection to become 'One'. Paul repeatedly reminds us to believe in His deity: He is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15) and is appointed as heir of all things, through whom also He made the world (Heb. 1:2). In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).
It is wrong to believe that presently on the throne we have both God and His Son Jesus! It stems from our erroneous belief in the trinity. Our Messiah is moreover not only the Son of David or Adam, but via another lineage He is also the Son of God. They are bonded together, and God and 'man' became One.
In Daniel, we read of the Ancient of Days, and unto Him appeared One like the Son of Man. They are not two, but in this vision they both became One. The Son is identified with the Jehovah of the Old Testament.
'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him' (Dan. 7:13).
Jehovah is the Ancient of Days who is the same yesterday, today and forever. As the Son of Man, He had to be born on earth to bequeath all His rights. We all agree that Christ is the Son of God, but why does it say that He is also the Son of David or Adam? Rightfully, He will claim His throne on earth, and then He will literally rule our world during the Millennium. Both Adam and David were incapable of achieving this.
For a reason, I stressed the relationship between God and Jehoshua or our Lord Jesus on earth. In Joshua 5, we have a similar treaty between Joshua

and the ‘Man’ who appeared as an angel. If any of us, as Joshua, are involved in a battle, we need to get familiar with our Lord. We need to become ‘one’, as together we will ensnare Satan. As Joshua did, we need to be subservient to the ‘Man’ or God Jehovah. We may question why Jehovah did not appear to all the people of Israel and why only to Joshua. Joshua did represent his people, but there is more than the obvious. Joshua, in the Hebrew language, is Jehoshua or ‘Jehovah is our salvation’. In the Greek language, it is translated as Jesus. On earth, Joshua represented the Lord Jesus as a man and as the leader of His people. He was subservient to God when he fell with his face to the ground, asking what the Lord had to say to His servant. Similarly, the Lord Jesus on earth was subservient to God, and He acknowledged Him in all His ways. He humbled Himself before God, as Joshua did. If any man on earth did humble himself before God, it was the Lord Jesus. In all His ways, He obeyed Him. He obeyed His words, and besides, He taught His Word to us with all its consequences. The Lord Jesus on earth needs to be our exemplar, prompting us to live a life similar to His. We need to follow His footsteps. Our Lord’s life on earth is acclaimed by grace, faith, humiliation and lack of ambition to attain something in life. Continually, He skirmished with the religious leaders of His time.
To Joshua, this meeting was significant, and three times it says that he saw the ‘Man’ with the drawn sword, and the ‘Man’ is portrayed as our Lord in the book of Revelation. The sword is His Word, and when He appears He will accomplish them (Heb. 4:12). As Peter is known by the Christian relics or paintings as the apostle with the keys, likewise the apostle Paul is known by the sword and the book. Rightfully, the Word of God was also imparted to Paul (1 Tim. 1:11). In the Bible, the sword is the Word of God or Christ, as depicted many times in the Old Testament and likewise in the book of Revelation. We need to subject ourselves to the Lord and His Word. Many people today say they are subservient to the Lord, but on questioning they rebuff His Word. If we allow His Word to permeate our lives, we involuntarily subject ourselves to His rule. The ‘Man’ said He was the commander of the host of the Lord. The host is the multitude of people under the command of Jehovah.
In this chapter, Jehovah and Joshua are reflected upon as ‘one’, and they both have a common enemy. It is similar today if we are tied with Christ in our battle with Satan. We cannot wish for a greater Leader, and under His command our battle with Satan is won.

Joshua 6

The Fall of Jericho
After crossing the Jordan, Joshua leads Israel to besiege Jericho—the fortified, lowest city on earth (~250m below sea level, near the Dead Sea). For six days, ~40,000 armed men, priests carrying the ark, and seven trumpeters silently circle the city once daily, blowing rams' horns at stops. On the seventh day, they march seven times; priests blast long trumpet blasts, Israel shouts, and the walls collapse instantly. The city is conquered: All inhabitants (except Rahab's household, marked by a scarlet

cord) are killed by sword; structures burned; valuables (silver, gold, bronze, iron) dedicated to God's treasury. Joshua curses any rebuilder: Foundations laid at cost of firstborn son, gates at youngest (Josh 6:26; fulfilled 1 Kings 16:34 by Hiel, whose sons Abiram and Segub die).

Typological Significance

Jericho symbolizes the cursed, fallen world (pre-Adamic chaos, Gen 1:2; judged like Sodom/Gomorrah, Jude 1:7)—doomed abyss yet mercifully preserved/recreated by God at immense cost. Key layers:

- Conquest Without Battle (Silent Faith): Israel's quiet marches typify believers' rest in Christ's victory, not fleshly strife (Rom 7:15–8:37; Exod 14:14). No siege/weapons—Satan (world's "god") falls via God's Word alone. Trumpets (rams' horns) echo the slain/resurrected Christ (Gen 22:13 ram in thorns; crown of thorns), empowering through joyful sound (Ps 89:15). Glow/horns link to Moses' radiant face (Exod 34:29; 2 Cor 3:7–11)—old Law's fading glory vs. new covenant's splendour.
- Seven Circuits: Completes God's work (seventh dispensation/Millennium rest). Silent walks = current grace age (God "quiet" to world); final shout = future revelation/judgment.
- Ban (Devoted to Destruction): City/contents "banned" (cursed emptiness, tohuw, Gen 1:2)—believers forfeit earthly rights/booty (Col 2:20; 3:2), dying to world's rudiments. No possessions claimed; simple life dedicated to heaven. Treasures to God = heavenly rewards from "cursed" earth.
- Rebuilding Curse: God "weakly" rebuilds fallen world (7-day creation) via firstborn's sacrifice (Jesus, Gal 3:13; "Cursed is everyone hung on a tree"). Reclaims pre-katabole glory (John 17:5), ending Law/death/Satan's rule. Hiel ("God lives") lays foundation on Abiram ("exalted father")—cross exalts God from chaos, birthing new creation (Isa 52:5).
- Rahab's Salvation: Church as remnant/dispensational grace, rescued from judgment (Heb 11:31; James 2:25).
- Jericho Path: Downhill to abyss (world's easy way, Good Samaritan parable—flesh powerless); uphill via Christ (narrow road from "wounded" earth, healing blind/Zacchaeus, Luke 18–19) to Jerusalem/heaven. Jesus' route to cross foreshadows our deliverance.

Overall: Jericho's fall illustrates effortless triumph over flesh/world via Christ's death/resurrection—stand silent in faith (Eph 6:11–14), heed the horn's promise, await full inheritance. From curse emerges eternal glory, mocking Satan's hold (Rom 8:37).

REVIEW

Israel must have been a remarkable sight for the people of Jericho, who stood on their secure walls. Quietly, they glimpsed their enemy, who walked past them without any threats of war. They had a marine corps leading them, blowing the trumpets. This history teaches us how we will conquer our enemy and how easy it is. Jericho is a symbol of the world that we will triumph over. We were born into this world, and yet it is our

enemy. The daily conflicts we have with our flesh seem to climax in our disposition. Even the Apostle Paul was well aware of them:
‘I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.’ (Rom. 7:15)
We have no power over our bodies, and yet they need to be conquered. Our desire is to control our lives, but that seems impossible. In brief, we need to be delivered from our world and especially from our own self. The only means is via our death, as that will end the stronghold of sin and death over our mortal bodies. We who did die in Christ are more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37), but up to now we have not achieved it, though we are very close to it. With the death of our Lord Jesus, He made an end of the old creation, and now, being resurrected from the dead, we can distance ourselves from our infirmities. That is true today, even when we are rubbing shoulders with the ‘old’.
Jericho does portray how we will be redeemed from the grip of our enemy. This city is the lowest town on earth and the closest to the abyss. Its mere location is a marvel. We previously mentioned that this city should have been buried deep below the waters of the world, but it never happened. Similarly, our world was rightfully judged and was deemed not to exist, but it does. Many believe that Jericho even existed before ‘our world began’ or before Adam was created, and today it is inarguably the oldest city on earth. In a nutshell, Jericho is a type of our world and it is also tied to the world that ‘was’. Sodom and Gomorrah was situated even lower than Jericho, but presently it is buried beneath the waters of the Dead Sea. Jude 1:7 says that the judgement that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of the judgement which will envelop our earth.
After Jericho fell, Joshua pronounced this solemn oath:
‘Cursed before the Lord is the man who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho: At the cost of his firstborn son will he lay its foundations; at the cost of his youngest will he set up its gates.’ (Jos. 6:26)
Joshua did not forbid anyone to rebuild the city of Jericho, but whoever intended to rebuild its ruins would be cursed. If anyone ventured to do that, they were given a clear plan as to how it should be done. Joshua did not forbid anyone, but it was not advocated.
God was inspired to do that when He re-created our world in seven days. The old Jericho portrays the past world that was judged by God long before Adam. He judged our world but later withdrew His judgement. To any judge, it is dishonourable. Jericho was rebuilt in seven days, and God did allow the curse to fall on Himself. That did not reflect God’s magnificence but rather it reflected His weakness. God had a good objective, and He did this at the expense of His Firstborn. The Lord Jesus died on the cross, and He did achieve His former glory, and we will share it. The only means is via the curse, and He faithfully agreed to achieve His plight.
Today we continually hear people cursing and blaming God for all the horrors and injustices that are rampant in our world today (Isa. 52:5). From all this turmoil, something good will arise. In general, Christians believe that it was Adam’s doing that caused our world's distress, and they think that by doing good, it will be sufficient to revert our great

dilemma. They are oblivious to the plan God made long before Adam was born. When He allowed the ‘waters’ to recede to create Adam, He willingly allowed the curse of sin to fall on Him. When He came to earth in the form of man, He openly hung on the cross in view of everyone. It says: ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.’ He lived under the curse of the law to redeem us from its rule (Gal. 3:10, 13).

When the Lord was about to die, He prayed in John 17 to reclaim the glory He previously had before the world was or the time before Adam was created (John 17:5). He did not ask for the glory He had before coming to earth as Man, but for the glory He had thousands of years earlier, or the time before Genesis 1:2a. He lost His glory when His Spirit moved over the face of the water, planning to create Adam. The glory He once relinquished will be far greater than before, and via the resurrected Christ He will claim His kingdom. Then every knee will bow down before Him. The triumph of this great achievement is to His honour and not ours.

In the ages to come, everyone will understand God’s work by salvaging our once lost earth. He did that in a rightful way. God accepted the loss and even jeopardised His glory to eventually retain it. Adam was judged equitably as part of the old creation, but in this way He will make an end of Satan’s hierarchy. He ended the curse of the law and brought an end to our greatest enemy, namely death. That is a simple thread in our Bible that runs through nearly all its pages.

When our Lord went to Jerusalem to be crucified, He followed a way running through Jericho to the Mount of Olives. Great emphasis is placed on Jericho, where He healed the blind man (Luke 18:35–43) and where Zacchaeus the tax collector came down from the tree to meet our Lord. Similarly, we have met our Lord in ‘Jericho’ or from our wounded earth, as Zacchaeus did, who dined with Him (Luke 19:5). The way to the new creation is via Jericho to Jerusalem, and symbolically it is the narrow way leading us to heaven. Naturally, we will follow the easy downhill route from Jerusalem to Jericho, a wide and easy road twisting to the abyss. We remember the history of the man who was seriously wounded on this downhill road, but luckily he met the Lord Jesus, who was going the other way from Jericho to Jerusalem. He saved him and even secured a place for him at the inn. Any person walking the downhill route, having their mind set on our world—whether he is a Pharisee or not—is powerless and incapable of helping themselves or anyone else. The only ‘One’ capable of helping us is going the other way. He is the Samaritan or our real Neighbour, and we need to trust Him.

Even though it seems to the world that God is dead to their plight, He does, however, live within us, and the phrase ‘the living God’ is found fifteen times in the New Testament. On the quiet, He is accomplishing His work: firstly in the Church, then Israel, and finally in the remaining nations of the world.

Hiel was the father of Abiram and Segub, on whom the foundation of Jericho was built (1 Kings 16:34). The name ‘Hiel’ in Hebrew means ‘God lives’ (Strong no. 2416) and ‘Segub’ the exalted. The foundation of our former lost earth was laid at the expense of our Lord, who died on the cross. Miraculously, our world that was previously swamped by water will

be the means to create something new, a monument to any who dare to question God's integrity.

Verse 1 reads that the gates of Jericho were closed and no one was allowed in or out of the city. This portrays our world today, as its doors are 'shut' once it entices us; we cannot escape. It is like a merry-go-round: you want to climb on it, and once you are spun around, you feel sick and want to jump from it. We need to understand that we are caught and encapsulated by its many laws. We believe that all the laws of the country are to protect us, but in practice, once we are caught in its many tentacles, it stifles us. Being caught, we are powerless to free ourselves. This is a true picture of our world today and also of our own nature that disenchants us. We understand we need to escape and seek deliverance. Our only salvation is a helping 'Hand' from outside to snatch us from our meagre existence. Any prisoner serving a jail sentence is protected from the outside world, but he has a gloomy way of life.

Whatever religion is centred on us is meaningless, and it will never set us free. The Lord reassured Joshua many times that the enemy is given to them. Satan is the god of our world, and in Christ we are more than conquerors, and we will undermine his kingdom.

Normally, an enemy will besiege a city and patiently wait for them to succumb, but here the Israelites merely walked quietly around them. Even to Moses, God did promise a victory when they felt vulnerable, marching to the shores of the Red Sea, whilst their enemy eagerly pursued them. Amazingly, there was no battle, as the Egyptians were drowned. 'The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.' (Exod. 14:14) Similarly, Paul encourages us to stand firm while awaiting our promised inheritance (Eph. 6:11–14). We too need to be quiet as we wait for His redemption and don't need to panic when confronted with our own weaknesses. The people of Israel merely walked quietly around the city of Jericho, making no threatening gestures, and the only sound was the blowing of the seven horns. There is no sense in trying to fight Satan or the injustices of our earth today. That will weaken us, and our Lord is clear that it will not deter Satan. We too need to be quiet and trust His work or the power of His Word. The vast majority of Christians today encourage us to scuffle with Satan, and there are countless books to make us aware of Satan's armoury. Daily we are tackled with the many injustices in the world, and any effort from our side to address them will surely weaken us spiritually. It is certainly misleading to think that the world will be reverted to a correct path once they revere the Ten Commandments. Satan will never relinquish the stranglehold he has on our earth.

When Israel followed the ark ahead of them, they acquainted themselves with their God. We need to follow the priest blowing the horn who echoed the Word of God or the voice of the ram, which was once slain. Our Lord has died on the cross, but His Word is alive in us today via the blowing of the horn. The blowing of the horn was not to amuse the people of Jericho, but instead it empowered the people of Israel.

'Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance.' (Ps. 89:15)

We merely need to listen to the Word of God, and that will cause us to conquer Satan. Presently, we live in a time when Satan is given ample freedom to do whatever he wishes, but He will be conquered on the last day. It is not today, for today we need to stand solidly on His promises. This faith will give us a great reward, as it pivots on our conviction, even when everything around us seems hopeless. What happens to the outside world is not our concern, as they also hear the sound of the trumpets. Remaining true to His Word will grant us the victory. Unquestionably, today we are involved in a battle, and we understand the world will not be conquered today. The question is whether we can remain standing in this turmoil, immune to our daily onslaughts. That is only possible if we heed the voice of the once slain Ram. We need to acquaint ourselves with the power that is inside of us, and must not rely on our own strength.

The power of His Word is not tied to the blast of the trumpet but rather to its import.

The trumpet is blown from the horn of a ram or any other small mammal, i.e., a goat. The horn of any animal is their weapon, and the battle of the horns is especially noticed before the mating season.

Today the ‘Ram’ is dead, but when the horn blows, it echoes the message of the resurrected Christ. To the world, the Ram has died, and they are oblivious to His reign.

When Abraham wanted to offer Isaac, God made him aware of a ram caught in the thorn bush: ‘Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns.’ (Gen. 22:13) That is a powerful picture of the Lord Jesus, who died for us instead of Isaac. He carried our sin or the curse of the law, as vividly portrayed by the horns that were caught in the thorn bush. The ram had no power inside himself, and He was slain under the curse of the law, having a crown of thorns on His head. We realise that Christ was slain, and nothing of His kingdom is evident today. His power has left Him, but He lives via the power of the horn, and it is the Word of God. Daniel was well aware that the kingdoms of our world are likened to the horns, as the beast with seven horns resembles the future kingdoms of our world.

The working of the law ended with the Lord's death, but the blowing of the horn entails the promises to accompany the new creation.

When Moses came down the mountain carrying the stone tablets with the inscribed testimony of Moses, he was not aware that his face was ‘glowing’. That happened because he had a face-to-face encounter with our Lord (Exod. 34:29).

The word ‘glow’ or ‘shine’ in the Hebrew is qaran (Strong no. 7160) and is similar to the word ‘horn’, qeren (Strong no. 7161). Moses' face was glowing after he saw the Lord on Mount Sinai, as he reflected His glory. Likewise, the horn reflects the glory of Christ. Paul remarked that the old system of the law written on stone, causing death, started with such great splendour that the people of Israel could not tolerate seeing Moses' face due to the glory of the old covenant; how much more splendour for the bearers of a far greater covenant! They reflect a far greater glory (2 Cor. 3:7–11). The horns did reflect this glory.

They had to walk seven times around the city. The number seven conveys

the work of God and also the respite the people will enjoy once they are part of the seventh dispensation or the Millennium. When the people walked quietly around the city, it reflected our dispensation, as we have already entered the rest. Today God is quiet, and He does not speak to the world per se, but in future He will speak, and then the world will be aware of His presence.

‘The city shall be under the ban; it and all that is in it belongs to the Lord.’ (Jos. 6:17)

In the following verse, the word ‘ban’ is mentioned four times, meaning the things that are cursed and set aside for destruction: ‘And you, by all means, abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.’ (v. 18)

At times, the ‘ban’ ought to be devoted to the Lord, as it is only holy unto Him, and at other times the ‘ban’ is a curse and an abomination to the Lord. In essence, it is not meant for us, but at times it is suitable for the Lord. Somehow it is related to the Hebrew word ‘tohuw’, meaning emptiness, as found in Genesis 1:2. Whatever is found in the city of Jericho is banned, and the Israelites were not allowed to seize anything from the city.

When the Israelites captured Ai, the booty was shared with all the people, unlike Jericho. The idea is that we, as the children of God, have no right to this world, as we forfeited everything when we accepted Christ. However, the Lord does give us the things we need, even though we were not privileged to possess them. Our time of glory will come, and we have no share in our world’s booty today. Presently, our Lord is not claiming His kingdom on earth, even though it could be part of His booty, as He did conquer it. Even though everything is promised to us, we need to have a similar attitude to our Lord’s. Legally, we have no rights to hold any earthly goods, as juridically it is not granted to us.

We have died with Christ from the rudiments of the world (Col. 2:20), and we did forfeit our earthly rights to claim any possessions. We are told to set our mind on things above, and not on the things below (Col. 3:2). We have died, and any judge will agree that a dead person has no rights on earth. If we live on earth, it needs to be a simple life, dedicated to Christ. We cannot butter our bread on both sides. This thought is entertained in the history of Jericho.

Every living creature in the city had to be destroyed by the sword. This seems cruel, but God did reserve the land for the Israelites, and no other nation was allowed to live in it. As previously mentioned, Rahab and her family were saved, highlighting our dispensation.

They burned the city, but only the silver, gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron did they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. That is part of the ‘ban’, as previously mentioned, but here the treasures are dedicated to our Lord.

Joshua 7 & 8

Summary of Achan's Sin and Its Typological Significance

The narrative in Joshua 7, centered on Achan's theft of forbidden spoils from Jericho, serves as a profound typological lens in your exposition, illustrating themes of disobedience, the allure of worldly (Babylonian) systems, the curse of the law, and the believer's call to grace under the current dispensation. Achan emerges not just as a historical figure but as a symbol of broader spiritual dynamics—particularly the Jewish nation's trajectory under the law and modern Christianity's entanglement with worldly ambitions. Below, I'll outline the key typological elements you highlight, structured for clarity, followed by reflections on their implications for today.

Key Typological Elements

Your analysis weaves Achan's story into a tapestry of Old and New Testament motifs. Here's a breakdown:

Typological Symbol	Biblical Reference(s)	Interpretation in Your Exposition	Broader Application
Achan as "Troubler" (Achor)	Josh. 7:25–26; Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15	Achan (from Judah's line, linked to Zerah via Tamar) represents the Jewish nation under the law's curse—coveting forbidden "booty" leads to national humiliation and exile. Yet, the Valley of Achor becomes a future site of blessing post-judgment, symbolizing restoration after dealing with "Babylonian" rebellion.	Modern believers (Jew or Gentile) who cling to law/earthly rights risk "troubling" God's work; true fruitfulness comes from turning from self to grace (Ezek. 37's dry bones revived).
The Babylonian Cloak (Robe)	Josh. 7:21; Gen. 10 (Nimrod); Rev. 17:5	The robe embodies Babylon's seductive power—world religions, confusion, and Satanic rule (Isa. 14:12–23). Achan's desire to "wear" it signifies craving worldly dominion, tying to Judah's failed kingship attempts (John 6:15).	Christianity's "ecumenical" unity (e.g., World Council of Churches) mirrors this; it's yeast-like permeation (Matt. 13:33; 2 Thess. 2:7), swelling institutions but diluting grace. Reject it to avoid losing heavenly inheritance.
Wedge of Gold (Tongue of	Josh. 7:21, 24 (Strong's	Gold as divine Word twisted into Babylonian	Satan's counterfeit

Gold)	H3956: "wedge" or "tongue"); Acts 2 (tongues of fire)	philosophy—human words mimicking God's (e.g., UN's "oneness" agenda). Achan buries it, hiding lawlessness.	gospel: eloquent but empty promises of unity/redemption without Christ. Believers must wield the true "golden tongue" (God's Word) in faith, not fleshly battles.
200 Shekels of Silver	Josh. 7:21; Mark 10:45 (ransom); Exod. 30:13–16 (tabernacle bases)	Silver as redemption/ransom, buried deepest—symbolizing distorted views of salvation (e.g., blending religions for "freedom" from nationalism). True redemption is Christ's paid price.	Today's "redemption" narratives (self-help, globalism) bury Christ's atonement; foundations of faith must rest on grace, not worldly blending.
Ai as "Heap of Ruins"	Josh. 7:2–5; 8:1–29 (Hebrew: ayin = ruin)	Initial defeat due to hidden sin; victory comes by turning backs (feigned retreat), yielding the "ruin" to God. Links to Pentecost's 3,000 converts (Acts 2) veering toward "Babylonian" principles (36 deaths = 6x6, man's fleshly failure).	Earthly life/world systems are inherently ruined (Eccl. 1–2's "vanity"); "conquering" them by denial (Mark 8:34–35) frees us. Focus on spiritual race (1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1), not law/flesh wars.
Achan's Household Judgment	Josh. 7:24–25	Corporate curse (family, livestock) prefigures law's drag on Israel/Judah (e.g., exiles to Assyria/Babylon; 1 Kings 12:14). No questioning God's justice—it's a lesson in undivided loyalty.	Modern "kingdom-building" (affluent churches, political religion) invites similar fallout; post-rapture,

new creation inherits glory (Rom. 8:19–23). Wait patiently; claim nothing now.

Theological Reflections and Lessons

It masterfully contrasts the "thin line" of our grace dispensation with Israel's law-bound failures, echoing Paul's warnings (e.g., Gal. 3:10–13 on law's curse; 2 Pet. 2:3 on greedy exploitation). Achan's isolated greed infects the nation (Josh. 7:1, 11), reminding us that personal compromise—coveting Babylon's "cloak" of power, philosophy, or redemption—halts collective advance (like Ai's initial rout). Yet, hope glimmers: Achor's transformation (from trouble to pasture) foreshadows millennial restoration, where law's tentacles loosen under the new covenant (Jer. 31:31–34).

Practically, this calls believers to:

- Deny Self, Embrace Ruins: As in Ai's strategy or Christ's cross (Luke 9:23–26), victory isn't conquest but surrender. Enjoy earthly gifts as grace (Eccl. 9:7–9), but anchor in heaven's "locked away" future (Col. 3:1–4).
- Guard Against Leaven: Babylon's mystery (Rev. 17) works subtly today—ecumenism, prosperity gospels, or law-infused ethics erode faith. Paul's "good fight" (2 Tim. 4:7) is faith's endurance, not Satan's mimicry.
- Ransom's Depth: Silver buried signals ignored redemption; lift Christ as the true price (1 Cor. 6:20) to free from sin's slavery, not worldly pressures.

This reading aligns with dispensational themes: Israel's law-story warns the Church against hybridizing grace with old-covenant ambitions. If Achan teaches anything, it's that hidden "booty" (earthly claims) buries potential—excavate by faith alone. What aspect of this typology resonates most with you, or would you like deeper dives into specific verses (e.g., Ezekiel 37 or Matthew 13 parables)?

REVIEW

‘But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in regard to the things under the ban, for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the things under the ban, therefore, the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel.’ [v. 1]

Achan was also known as Achor (v. 26), because the Valley of Achor is named after him. He was a troublemaker, as he violated God's specific ban. He seized some of the loot from the captured city of Jericho. Achan and his family were cursed and died. Strangely, later in Israel’s history, the name Achor is tied to the blessings the Lord will bestow on them (Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15).

Previously, we discussed the history of Judah and Tamar, who had two sons, namely Perez and Zerah. Somehow, this chapter is linked to Achan, as he was also from the tribe of Judah. Verse 21 cites his undertaking: ‘When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath’ (v. 21).

His endeavour stunned all Israel, as they were humiliated by the inhabitants of Ai, and Achan’s household was executed. Now, it is common to question God’s judgement that involved both Achan’s livestock and children. I don’t even try to question God’s dealing with Achan, but we will learn from the entire Book of Joshua that there is a thin line underlining our dispensation. That will elucidate God’s dealings with us right now, explaining many difficult passages.

Achan discovered a great booty, and I am sure he needed some help from other people to hide it. It is not clear, but here God addresses the whole nation, as God’s anger glowed against all the sons of Israel (v. 1, 11). Joshua sent spies to Ai, and the spies returned thinking it would be an easy combat, and that they would merely need an army of 2,000 or 3,000 men, given the few inhabitants (v. 3). On that day, about 3,000 men went to fight the people of Ai, but they retreated with great humiliation, as 36 people were killed when they descended a mountainous terrain. Their humiliation had nothing to do with their geographical disposition, as Ai was located uphill. It was their moral fibre.

This sudden humiliation distressed both Joshua and the elders of Israel. They cast dust upon themselves, acknowledging that they were created from the dust of the earth and are powerless. As with Moses, who thought it was the end of their journey when they were trapped at the Red Sea, likewise here Joshua thought their mission had ended, as they were surrounded by so many mighty enemies. God spurred Joshua to stand on his feet.

The reason for this great humiliation was that they had failed His Word and commands, and the reason for their failure. They had to learn lesson number one: if they snubbed His Word, He would reject them, and they would remain in the country if they did not trust His Word.

Paul compares our life to a race being run (1 Cor. 9:24), and any race has strict rules that need to be adhered to. Many a time, an athlete has stood on the podium, but later he was denied the title due to the testing of a banned drug. Similarly, we too need to stick to the rules and be sure that our race is a battle of faith and not of the law. Paul says that he fought the good battle of faith, adhering to its principles. Doing battle with Satan or our world is uncalled for, and certainly it will drain all our energy. When we accepted Christ, we were placed in a race, and if we do not heed the grace of God nor live by faith, we will certainly miss our purpose in life. Peter warned that many a believer will be exploited by their co-workers, who in secret try to benefit themselves financially. In their greed, they will fabricate clever lies to get hold of your money (2 Pet. 2:3). We have nothing to sell, as we are totally dependent on God. Our earthly motives may sway us off beam.

Any war is costly, and the booty taken by Achan could have been justified when he claimed the bar of gold and silver. Many today will praise the Lord, shouting ‘Hallelujah’, claiming that the booty is their rightful share. That will clear all their expenses. Every war is a business, but on this occasion our Lord did not justify it. We are God’s people, and we need to remain faithful to His Word, and then He will accomplish His work in and through us. He will decide what is ours, but in theory we cannot claim any. God has promised His people many things—i. e., glory and power—but that is invested solely in the new creation, after the rapture of the Church. This is true to both the Church and Israel. Right now, during our dispensation, we need to be patient. Now, our creation waits eagerly for the sons of God to be revealed (Rom. 8:19). Prior to that time, we can assert no authority. To claim things today is wrong, as we need to wait for the rapture, and then we will be appointed as sons. We are eligible to claim the world once we are His sons. We have died to the world, and yet we are alive to Christ. The world, as part of the old, is doomed, and it has no part of the ‘new’. Even our own body does not belong to us, as we are bought with a price. The only assurance we have today is that if we serve Him, He will care for us. The Lord will determine what we need, because we forfeited everything on earth when we died with Him. If we do claim our earthly rights, do not anticipate God’s blessings. The belongings we treasure today are not rightfully ours, and we cannot put our stamp on them.

‘When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them’ (Josh. 7:21).

Achan was tempted by the robe, silver, and gold, and via fate his plight was clinched.

When Achan desired to wear the beautiful cloak from Babylon, he desired to be part of it. We ought to be familiar with the history of Nimrod (Gen. 10), who endeavoured to make Babylon the capital of the world.

Babylon is the mother of all prostitutes and the abominations of the world (Rev. 17:5). It is an enclave of all our world’s religions and equally true the confusion in our world today. When our world’s empires collapse, then Babylon is named, as they are the centre of all revolt. In Isaiah 14 (vv. 12–23), it portrays the final plunge of Satan, who is the king of Babylon. Achan desired to rule Babylon, being clothed by its robe. He desired power, and besides, he was from the tribe of Judah.

If any person in the Bible is named whose fate or plight was decided, it must have been Judas, who betrayed our Lord. ‘Judas’ in the Greek language hints at Judah, and indirectly he portrays our Jewish nation today. In Acts 1 (v. 17), Judas died, and it says:

‘For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.

’Besides, Peter later says that they (the Jewish nation or Judas) stumbled because they disobeyed the message—what they were destined for (1 Pet. 2:8). It was part of God’s plan, and many do find it difficult to grasp. The law was given to Judah, not as a means to be blessed by it. When the heathen nations look upon the laws, it will certainly discourage them from

even trying to comply with them. In short, we ought to be pleased that it was not given to all the nations of the world. The Jewish nation today is an example to any nation on earth of what the true character of the law is. It did not enhance the Jewish nation, and likewise we can expect no blessing. If we try to adhere to it, it will merely drag us down.

Israel had the opportunity to refuse living under the law at Mount Sinai, when Moses asked them whether they wanted to adhere to it or not. If they refused to live under the curse of the law, they were not allowed to live in the Promised Land. Israel agreed to comply with the law and therefore the many laws. Time and again, they failed. Once King Solomon died, the ten tribes of Israel refused to be burdened by them or to live under the curse of Rehoboam, who succeeded him. Rehoboam spoke no kind words, condensing the law:

‘My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions’ (1 Kings 12:14).

The ten tribes of Israel went their own way and did not take long before they went into the Assyrian exile.

Not much later, God put the other two tribes of Israel into the Babylonian exile, after they refused to be faithful to Him.

Any person living today under the law does it voluntarily, as the Scriptures do not compel us to adhere to them. Even today, if any wish to live in the Promised Land or Israel, they need to adhere to the laws, and that proved impossible time and again. The Jews today circumvent God’s grace, and they have no right to claim Israel. They refused to believe in Christ and were caught in the vice-like grip of the law. The laws of Moses infiltrate our modern-day Christianity, blinding their eyes to Christ. Any person upholding the law will falter, and they will be caught in its many tentacles. It will steer them away from the Word of God, making them slaves, favouring to be tortured by Rehoboam.

Achan means ‘troubler’ (v. 25), and he is a type of the Jewish nation today. He reasoned plausibly, but in return he harmed the working of God.

There was at least one time when the Jewish nation wanted to crown the Lord Jesus as their King on earth (John 6:15). He instead withdrew Himself higher up into the mountains. He sensed this but refused, as they were primarily involved with earthly things. There were good reasons for the Jews to hail Him as their King, as He was from the direct lineage of David, but our Lord refused, as He was reluctant to be placed under the curse of the law. His mission was to free them once they entered the new covenant and not as part of the old covenant. After Christ’s resurrection, they were reluctant to accept Him.

This impression is also raised when Joseph lived in the house of Potiphar. Potiphar’s wife sought a sexual relationship with Joseph, but he refused. In the end, Joseph was blamed, and sadly he was refused entry to the house again. Symbolically, it is the household of the law. In the end, he became lord of another household of Potiphar, even though he was in prison. The woman—or Judah—wanted a relationship with Joseph in their own house of the law, but being premature and part of the law, he refused her. It ended with Joseph held in prison in the other house as Potiphar, but then he

portrayed the ‘remaining ten tribes’ of Israel. Paul was also imprisoned, and frequently he mentioned that he was a prisoner of Christ (Eph. 4:1). The Sanhedrin realised that if they allowed the Lord free rein, the entire nation would follow Him. The majority of the people wanted the Lord on the throne, and they agreed amongst themselves that if they arrested Him, the majority would cause a riot. That would have been too dangerous for the Sanhedrin. It is difficult to grasp why, soon afterwards, they managed to crucify our Lord, and only a very small minority of people believed in Him after His resurrection. The reason is that the crowds wanted Him as part of the law, under the monopoly of the Jewish system. Christianity is also to blame for trying to adhere to the many laws, which evolve around their daily lives. They fancy boosting their ego under the motto that they will increase the kingdom of God, but that is not from God. They believe the kingdom is the Church, and they govern it. Our Lord will never allow this. We are delivered from Babylon and the world, but the difficulty is that the principle of Babylon has permeated their thoughts. The Jewish nation felt at home in Babylon, and the Talmud was written while they were in the Babylonian exile. Similarly, today Christianity strives to be ‘one’, and this thinking has its roots in Babylon. The Book of Zechariah was written after the Jewish nation was delivered from the Babylonian exile, but Zechariah pictures them returning to exile. Abraham once lived in Babylon before being called by God, and similarly it is also the birthplace of the Jewish Talmud. Previously, the Jews never served the Lord, but once they lived in Babylon, they created their own religious beliefs. Similarly, today many Christians believe that the Bible was written during the Babylonian exile. They are of the opinion that our belief in creationism stemmed from the Babylonians’ belief in creation, thus the writer of the Book of Genesis had to portray God as such. Today, modern-day Christianity willingly places itself under the laws, snubbing God’s grace. Our bastion is His grace, and if we ignore this free gift, we will be drawn into the tentacles of the law. We need to choose between the two. Once Christianity ignores their faith, they can be likened to Israel living in idolatry. They will reside in Babylon and not in Jerusalem.

In Matthew 13, Christ cites a parable regarding the mystery of His Kingdom that is valid today. In one of them, a woman secretly hid yeast into three batches of dough. The yeast did its work in secret, and it permeated the dough, drawing our attention to modern-day Christianity, who are outsized (Matt. 13:33). Sadly, they are likened to the yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The woman who did that quietly is Babylon (Rev. 17:5).

Paul says that the mystery of lawlessness is already working amongst us, and that is the leaven (2 Thess. 2:7). Babylon is ambitiously striving for one great religious empire. The world will be ruled under their banner, but then luckily we are gone. The cloak of Achan epitomises the striving or the harmony of all the religious beliefs on earth.

The judgement involving the household of Achan can also be likened to the time when the Jews escaped the Egyptian exile soon after Christ’s resurrection. The Church, who believed in Christ, is the remnant who remained living, to later capture Ai.

If we are swayed by the powers of our world, we too will lose the battle. Many politicians today believe the quickest way to enter politics is via religion. It is their means to gain power. Most Churches today are very affluent, and I am sure they used the booty of Achan to achieve their means. The great cathedrals have great treasure rooms, and by building a huge tower, they intimidate the people, trying to direct their power. That is no means to attain victory, and the Lord will not bless their endeavours. Throughout our life, we need to acquaint ourselves with the idea that we forfeited all our rights on earth, plus our Babylonian cloak. As with Achan, the Jewish nations are guilty, with the many Christians who wrongly assume that they have the means to swell God's kingdom on earth. One day, they will say:

'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' (Matt. 7:22).

Our Lord will say, 'Depart from me, as I don't know you.' Slowly, they will understand that the miracles they performed were directed by Babylon. Achan buried the Babylonian cloak beneath the soil in his tent. The reason is to epitomise our present dispensation of grace, as Babylon is now totally forgotten. Prior to our dispensation, Babylon was the nucleus of human government, and in Isaiah 14, Satan is known as the king of Babylon. Once in the future, when the Antichrist is known, he will physically sit on his throne at Babylon.

In the Book of Daniel, the kingdoms of the world are portrayed, and the importance of Babylon is highlighted many a time. When Jerusalem transgressed, their capital was no longer Jerusalem, but instead it became Babylon. Similarly, since our Lord was crucified outside the borders of Jerusalem, we too are called to meet Him outside Jerusalem (Heb. 13:13). Nebuchadnezzar was the King of Babylon—bear in mind this was not the end of Babylon. The city continued as the capital of the Medo-Persian Empire. That lasted for a short time, as Babylon and the Empire became vulnerable. Then Alexander the Great appeared, and he initiated the Greek–Macedonian Empire. Alexander's initiative was to rebuild Babylon and make it the nucleus of its Empire. At a young age, Alexander died at Babylon. To recap, Babylon was the core of the three great Empires. Shortly before our Lord appeared on earth, the Roman Empire was in power, and they were the first empire who did not have Babylon as its capital. Daniel stressed that the Roman Empire was different from the previous ones; the difference being its capital. During the time of our Lord Jesus, the Romans had Rome as their capital, and since then we merely have the remains of Babylon. It fell apart, and many tried to revive it, but until today it never happened. I believe ISIS may fit the criteria. According to the Book of Daniel, our world will be followed by an Empire or kingdom that will be ruled by a nation with ten kings, and Babylon will be their capital. In essence, every kingdom had Babylon as their capital except the Roman Empire, and that is the time of the Church. The reason why we fail to notice Babylon today is because the cloak is buried beneath the earth, but in the near future, the city will again bloom to become the capital of the world.

For the past 2,000 years, Babylon has been a derelict, levelled to the ground. Albeit today there is a spiritual Babylon, and Paul says: ‘For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work’ (2 Thess. 2:7). This is true today and also throughout Paul’s lifetime. Revelation 17 leaves no doubt that the woman is a mystery, and she is called Babylon. Their goal is to gather all the nations under one religion, as in the time of Nimrod in Genesis 10. That is the striving of the New Age movement, the United Nations, and the World Council of Churches. Their dream is impossible today, but as the rapture of the Church looms, we can expect it to happen soon. Since God’s work on earth remains a mystery to our world, likewise the work of Satan via Babylon will also be a mystery to them. In the Bible, we find a hint of both mysteries. As in future our Lord will reveal Himself to our world, and in a similar manner Satan will also show himself to our world. The true character of Babylon will then be appreciated by our world, and their eyes will experience Satan’s cruelty. If we accept Christ and yearn for earthly respect and admiration, allowing it to be our prime objective in our life, then we will be lured away to the aspiration of Babylon. We will be saved, but regrettably we would have lost our calling.

Our Lord spoke many parables regarding the discord of Babylon. It is likened to the large tree that was meant to be a small mustard tree. It is like the leaven buried in the three measures of dough that made the bread swell, but its weight remained the same. Today, the Churches find it difficult to interpret its meaning, refusing to believe it pictures them. It is the working of Babylon. The woman who hid the leaven in the dough is a woman who rules Babylon. The mustard tree was huge, and the birds of heaven (powers of Satan) nested in its branches. This tree is likened to the tree in Daniel 4 that was previously chopped down, but this tree will grow again. Both Daniel 4 and the mustard seed portray Babylon. Modern Christianity is weakened by becoming an institution in our world today. Needless to say, that is true of any person who snubs His grace. It is strange to notice that whenever the Scripture has a negative connotation regarding our dispensation, the general Church refuses to acknowledge them. That is the reason why the parables of our Lord in Matthew 13 are so misunderstood. They fail to recognise themselves as being part of the tree, the yeast, or the Babylonian cloak in this chapter. If we as Christians strive to please the world or the idealism of Babylon, and if we allow it to happen, then we will lose our battle. It is easy to rely on our world or government, but that ought not to be our fortitude. Unknowingly, we will be lured away to the relics of Babylon.

Our Lord told us that whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Him will find it (Matt. 16:25). We can desire the cloak belonging to Babylon, but then we will forfeit our inheritance, bearing no fruit for all eternity. We need to see the world as a ruin and as part of Babylon. If it is our ambition to develop it, it will definitely drag us down, and we will not run the race of faith. We will run fast, but in the opposite direction. That person will only be saved, having no reward. When Israel conquered Ai for the second time, they merely turned their backs on them by running away, and that guaranteed them the victory.

‘Ai’ in Hebrew means ‘a heap of ruins’, and that is our life on earth as seen by God. We may treasure it, but to God our world is void. Strangely, once we discount our world or ‘let it loose’, then it will be given to us. Generally, I believe this is true to us today or to any person who was once overwhelmed by illness or who had a near escape from death. If they survived, they see life differently. If any is willing to forfeit their rights on earth, it will be to his gain. Our life on earth is brief, and we need to make the most of it. It is not to better the world but rather ourselves. It should not be at the expense of others. Being too wrapped up by our earthly goals will be to the detriment of our own spiritual life.

If our prime ambition is to try to convert the earth at the expense of our own spiritual life, it will not suffice. The Scripture is clear: the earth will not repent, and it is impossible—I will not even try. We can communicate the good news of the Gospel because we do this willingly and not as a burden. If any accept Christ, he is drawn from the world and from its many problems. That is a general trend in the Bible, and King Solomon says that everything on earth is void, a chasing after the wind, and by doing that, he will gain nothing under the sun (Eccl. 2:11). He concludes that we need to enjoy life while the sun is shining, and Solomon never mentions tomorrow, for tomorrow we are all dead. While enjoying the sunshine, bathe in it, for later the clouds will darken our world. That is no pessimism, and it will certainly teach us to enjoy when the wind is not against us. The tide of life is ever fluctuating, as the waves of the sea.

The word ‘vanity’ or ‘meaningless’ is mentioned 32 times in the Book of Ecclesiastes. This same Book says it is impossible to straighten things that were made crooked (Eccl. 7:13). We don’t even need to try to straighten it, as it will vex our spirit. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning (Eccl. 7:4), for when we are confronted with the questions of death, we will learn the secrets of life. Then we realise that we are made from the dust of the earth. We can fill our heart with the Word of God and do whatever pleases our heart.

If we try to hold on to dear life to validate our earthly rights, it will certainly slip through our fingers. We need to see life from a different perspective, and then we will appreciate the words of King Solomon, even when not being a Christian. Most people who receive Christ will do that after realising the world has nothing to give them.

Our Lord says that if any wishes to follow Him, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Him. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel’s will save it (Mark 8:34–35).

We as Christians need to choose whether we want to comply with God’s Word or whether we will be lured away by Babylon. If this is true, we will be ashamed of Christ and His Words, and likewise Christ will be ashamed of us as well (Luke 9:26). We can enjoy life, but that ought not to be our primary goal in life. Whatever we receive, we can enjoy, as God gave it to us in grace. Job had a similar view: as the Lord has taken away everything, but he received them back more plentiful. Our real future is locked away in heaven, and the things on earth are fleeting in nature. The things in heaven need to captivate our mind. One day, Christ’s glory will shine

through us, once we are called His sons. This is proportionate to our trust in the living Word of God, and for sure it will trigger suffering (Rom. 8:17–19).

Joshua allowed 3000 men to conquer Ai, but things went wrong. Similarly, when Peter preached the Gospel on the day of Pentecost, 3000 men also accepted Christ. You tend to think there may be a link between the two, as the Church did veer off course by allowing the principles of Babylon. 36 men died. 6 multiplied by 6 is 36, and 6 can have both a negative and a positive connotation. Six embodies man, and somehow that may also define our own battle with the flesh, outside the spiritual sphere. If we do battle with Satan, it ought to be on a spiritual level. That will trick Satan and repel his attack on us. If we do battle with him to boost our earthly gains, it will certainly stifle us.

The wedge of gold in Joshua 7:21, 24 that was stolen by Achan could also be translated as the tongue of gold. In Hebrew, the word wedge in this chapter could be translated as tongue, as both share Strong's number 3956. Typologically speaking, gold expresses the Word, as in Acts 2, when tongues of fire descended on the believers. Since that time, Peter and the believers have fluently spoken the Words of God. The tongue of gold originating from Babylon portrays human philosophy. The memo of the United Nations and the World Council of Churches is to unite everyone as 'one'. That dream is only possible once the world accepts Christ, and He will be the golden (everlasting) tongue (Word). Satan tries to mimic God in all His ways, and his words will never suffice, even though they may sound realistic.

The 200 shekels of silver represent money, as in many languages the word has the same meaning. The word redemption or ransom stems from that word, as we are bought with a price. Christ paid the ransom. Christ has come to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

The silver was buried deeper than the rest of Achan's booty (Joshua 7:21). Being buried beneath the soil, beneath the gold and the Babylonian cloak, symbolises that the silver has to do with the basis of our faith. The foundations of the tabernacle were basically silver, portraying that before redemption can be accomplished, a price had to be paid. We were slaves to sin and were bought with a price.

Even today, people are aware that they need to be 'redeemed', but they are oblivious to what that means. Having rejected Christ, they suppose they need to be freed from outside pressure. They believe that will happen once all the different religions and nations are blended. Nationalism today is not tolerated. To recap, the silver and the gold represent the philosophy of Babylon, prompting us to be 'one' in all manner of ways.

Achan died in the Valley of Achor. In Isaiah 65:10 and Hosea 2:15, we read that Achor will be a fruitful place. That is possible once the problem of Achan—or the problem of Babylon—has been dealt with. Whilst the problem of Achan was still in our midst, they lived in the valley full of dry bones (Ezekiel 37). In this valley, the world has nothing to give them, as the dry bones represent the whole house of Israel. They argue today, and especially during the great tribulation:

‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is gone; we are cut off’ (Ezekiel 37:11). This verse projects our world or the Jewish nation today, living without God. Once they are willing to turn their back on our world or the ‘old’, they will receive life. Then God will physically blow His Spirit into their ‘dry bones’, and that will be a joyous time for Israel.
On the second occasion, Israel fought Ai, and then the entire population of Ai, including the men and women, was wiped out—12,000 in all. The number 12 conveys the ruling of our world. Our life is encapsulated and ruled by the 12 hours of the day and the 12 zodiac signs at night. The New Jerusalem will have 12 foundations, and Israel will then rule the earth. The world will yield to their rule, and Israel will be placed above all the other nations.
Today, it is not difficult to distance ourselves from the outside world, and it is not done by living in a secluded place. It is in our minds. We can easily go with the heartbeat of the world, but our thoughts need to be somewhere else. Whatever occupies our mind cannot be plundered by anyone. We don’t need to physically leave this world, as it can be done by focusing our minds on Christ. Our hearts need to be filled with the Words of God, and then automatically we will distance ourselves from outside influences. We are called out of the world, but amazingly we are still part of it, and nevertheless we can enjoy it.

Joshua 8:30-34
Typological Significance of Joshua's Blessing at Ebal and Gerizim
Joshua 8:30–35 masterfully elevates this "insignificant" historical event into a profound dispensational blueprint, portraying the Church as the hidden "firstborn" inheritor of God's promises through Ephraim's lens. Far from a mere ritual, the dual mountains, Shechem's centrality, and the unhewn altar symbolize the paradoxical unity of blessing and curse under grace—where the Church, "cut off" yet exalted, embodies the new covenant's fulfillment. This echoes Deuteronomy's "second law" (repetition underscoring mystery) and ties into the patriarchs' Shechem sojourns, Joseph's dreams, and Christ's Samaritan encounters. Below, I outline the core typological threads, structured for clarity, followed by reflections on their outworking in our dispensation.
Key Typological Elements
These symbols interconnect to depict the Church as Ephraim's spiritual counterpart: scattered exiles who are "lean yet fat," cursed in the flesh but blessed in the Spirit, ruling as priests-kings post-rapture.

Typological Symbol	Biblical Reference(s)	Interpretation in Your Exposition	Broader Application to the Church
Dual Mountains (Ebal & Gerizim)	Deut. 11:29; 27:12–13; Josh. 8:33	"Bare" (Ebal: bald/cursed) and "cut off" (Gerizim: severed yet fruitful via Ephraim) as twins—blessings/curses read as one (Josh. 8:34).	Church's paradox: dead/alive (Rom. 6:11), sinful/faultless (2 Cor. 5:21), exiled/blessed (Eph. 2:6). We "sit" on both slopes—exile's curse (Assyrian-like

		Tribes split evenly (6/6), ark-centered; no distinction in Joshua's blessing.	scattering) yields heavenly seating; unity in Christ dissolves old divides (Gal. 3:28).
Shechem as Central Valley	Gen. 12:6–7 (Abraham); 33:18–20 (Jacob); 37:12–14 (Joseph); John 4 (Samaritan woman); Josh. 24	Nestled between mountains, Ephraim's turf (firstborn "twice fruitful"); site of altars, wells, refuges, and splits (1 Kings 12). Christ's detour here fulfills patriarchal promises quietly.	Church's "mystery" locus: not Jerusalem (Judah/law), but Shechem (grace/Ephraim). We inherit "double portion" (Deut. 21:17)—heaven/earth rule (Rev. 5:10); scattered globally (like 10 tribes in West/Europe/America) yet rooted in living water (John 4:14; promises to Abraham via Christ, Gal. 3:29).
Unhewn Altar & Plastered Stones	Deut. 27:2–8; Josh. 8:30–32; cf. 1 Kings 6:7 (Solomon's temple)	White-plastered, upright stones (Word written twice: old/new covenant); perfectly fitted without tools—altar for offerings.	Living stones (1 Pet. 2:5), hearts inscribed (2 Cor. 3:3), clothed in righteousness (Rev. 19:8). Church as "faultless building" (Eph. 2:21)—reborn, complete in Christ; no "implements" (self-effort/law) needed. Smoke ascends as sweet savor (Phil. 4:18), prefiguring rapture's vanishing glory (like Elijah's Carmel altar, 1 Kings 18).
Ephraim/ Joseph as Firstborn Type	Gen. 41 (Pharaoh's double dreams); 37 (Joseph's dreams); Josh. 24:32 (burial); Rom. 11 (Gentile "fatness" provokes Judah's	Ephraim: cursed/exiled yet doubly blessed (lean cows fat inside); Joseph's dreams (sheaves/stars bowing) unlock Genesis' "image of God" climax—Church as sons (Rom. 8:19, 29). Mary parallels: barren yet fruitful.	We (Gentile-heavy Church) are "grafted" firstborn (Eph. 1:5), sidelining Judah temporarily (Rom. 11:11–12). Post-rapture, dual role: heavenly priests, earthly co-rulers with Israel (Heb. 12:22–23). Forgotten like Joseph in prison—butler (blessed

	jealousy)		world) overlooks us till vindication.
Samaritan Woman & Well	John 4:1–42; Gen. 33:19 (Jacob's well/land)	At Shechem's well (promises' "water/life"), she—type of 10 tribes/Church—recognizes Messiah first; leaves unnamed, city believes via His Word. Disputes Gerizim vs. Jerusalem worship.	Early Church's quiet spread: from "outcasts" (Samaritans/10 tribes) via Gospel's living water (John 7:38). No ego (unnamed woman); focus on Christ's voice (John 10:27). Fulfills wells' typology (Isaac reopening, Gen. 26)—unclogging patriarchal promises for us.
Historical Echoes at Shechem	Judg. 9 (Abimelech's failed kingship, thorn-bush parable); Judg. 21 (Benjamin's rescue); 1 Kings 12 (Rehoboam/Jeroboam split); Josh. 24 (Joshua's farewell)	Thorn (law) rules briefly; olive/fig/vine (new covenant graces) await; Benjamin (Paul-type) illuminated via Joseph; 10 tribes reject yoke for lighter "calf" (grace shadow?).	Church rejects law's "scorpions" (1 Kings 12:14) for Christ's easy yoke (Matt. 11:30). We "abduct" from world's dance (Judg. 21) into refuge cities (priest-ruled grace). Paul (Benjamin) unveils "my gospel" mysteries (Rom. 16:25)—light to Judah.

Theological Reflections and Dispensational Lessons

This event's "second writing" (Deut./Josh.) mirrors our grace era's "second Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45–47), where law's echoes amplify gospel freedom. Joshua (Ephraimite, Joseph's type) blesses all Israel undivided—foreshadowing the Church's corporate perfection (no Jew/Gentile split, Eph. 2:14–16). Yet the paradox bites: we "share in both" (dead/alive, cursed/blessed), like Pharaoh's dreams—surface leanness (exile, suffering) veils inner plumpness (eternal inheritance, 1 Pet. 1:4). Shechem's obscurity (vs. Jerusalem's spotlight) guards the mystery: the Church isn't a "sequel" to Israel but the concealed firstborn, drawing life from buried promises (Joseph's bones, Gen. 50:25; Heb. 11:22).

Practically, this typology urges:

- Paradoxical Identity: Embrace your "Ebal side" (flesh's barrenness, Rom. 7:18) without despair—Gerizim's fruit blooms in Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). Study self critically, but view through Christ's lens (Col. 3:3).

- Quiet Fulfillment: Like the Samaritan's unnamed joy or Joseph's forgotten plea, advance the gospel sans fanfare—no building empires (Abimelech's thorns), just well-side witness (John 4:28–30).
- Rapture Horizon: Elijah's soaked altar (Trinity-soaked Church) consumed foreshadows our exit (1 Thess. 4:17)—tribulation's "anticlimax" follows, but we rule as leaders/judges (Rev. 20:6; Josh. 8:33).
- Firstborn Duty: As Ephraim's heirs, provoke jealousy redemptively (Rom. 11:11)—our "fatness" (global witness) awakens Israel, fulfilling dual dreams (heaven's stars, earth's sheaves).

This Shechem focus reframes history: not Jerusalem's drama, but Ephraim's subtlety unlocks sonship (Rom. 8:15). How does this "double portion" paradox play out in your view of current global Christianity's "exile"—scattered yet influential? Or shall we unpack a specific echo, like the thorn-bush parable in Judges 9?

REVIEW
Historically speaking, that is an insignificant event in Israel’s history: when Joshua had to build an altar on Mount Ebal. Since Joshua entered the Land of Canaan, he had to officially bless the people of Israel (Joshua 8:33). The altar was built on Mount Ebal, and the people had to gather on either of the two slopes—either Mount Ebal or Mount Gerizim. In that valley, Joshua read the Law of Moses to all the people. The slopes of these two mountains were rather steep, and there was a valley that divided them, about 690 metres apart. It was like an amphitheatre that nestled the complete Israelites. When Joshua read the law to the people, one half of the nation was on the side of Mount Ebal (lying north), and the other half of the nation was in the south on the slope of Mount Gerizim. Inside this valley was also Shechem, as it lay a few hundred metres either to the east or west. Historically, we will find that Shechem had an important role to play in the life of the Patriarchs, and also in the history of the 10 tribes. This gathering was done in accordance with the command God gave to Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy (chapters 11:29 & 27:12). Deuteronomy means ‘a second law’. The Book can be divided into two parts: the one from chapter 1 to 11, and the other from chapter 12 to 28. At the end of both passages, Moses reminds them of this event. It was mentioned twice by Moses just before he died, pronouncing both the blessings and the curses that would befall Israel.
‘Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known. Now it shall be, when the LORD your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, toward the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain opposite Gilgal, beside the terebinth trees of Moreh?’ (Deuteronomy 11:26-30).

The command of the Lord is His teaching. Gerizim is better known than Mount Ebal, even though they oppose each other. The reason is that Gerizim is better known amongst the 10 lost tribes of Israel, and this was evident amongst the Samaritans in the time of our Lord. It was sacred to them.

Our Lord met the Samaritan woman at the well at Sychar, which was nestled in the valley between the two mountains. There, at the well of Jacob, the woman questioned our Lord about whether they had to worship God at Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem (John 4). The Jewish nation worshipped God on the Temple Mount or Mount Zion, but the 10 tribes worshipped Him at Mount Gerizim. The argument was that the Jewish nation assumed Abraham offered Isaac at Mount Moriah, and the 10 lost tribes of Israel claimed that Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Gerizim. The Jewish religious ceremonies remained centred at the temple in Jerusalem, and the 10 tribes at Mount Gerizim.

Today, many believe that there is a dissimilarity between Mount Ebal and Gerizim, as the one was cursed and the other blessed. According to Deuteronomy 11:29, the curses were directed toward Mount Ebal and the blessings toward Mount Gerizim. It is easy to misinterpret this, as we will find that there is no difference between the two mounts. If Mount Ebal is cursed, why did they place the altar on top of the mount?

In this history, the Israelites were seated on the slopes of both mountains, and I am sure that both the curses and blessings were read together (Joshua 8:34). Joshua merely blessed the people here, and he had no intention to curse any tribe in particular. The tribes of Israel were split in two, and in between them was the ark. There is a synonymous parallelism between the two mounts, and they should be seen as twins belonging to each other.

The word Mount Ebal means ‘bare mountain’, as the mountain was barren with hardly any vegetation growing upon its slopes. The word Mount Gerizim means ‘cut off’. If the one is bald and the other is cut off, then they both have a similar meaning. In general, it suggests whatever used to be there has been cut off. The town of Shechem is nestled between the two mountains of Ephraim, and the word Ephraim means ‘twice as fruitful’. God’s promise to Ephraim, who is the firstborn and yet continually known to be ‘the second’, means that in essence, the blessings and the curses should be regarded as one.

In Deuteronomy 27, we read that Israel had to erect large stones on Mount Ebal, and they were to be plastered white. Upon them, Joshua had to write the Words of God twice. The white-plastered stones on which the Word of God was written are, symbolically speaking, a picture of the new covenant or the believers of our dispensation. In Christ, we are the living stones (1 Peter 2:4), clothed with white linen (Revelation 19:8), as the Word of God is written in our hearts (2 Corinthians 3:3).

The stones had to stand upright, and they were not allowed to be cut with implements. From them, they had to build an altar, and the stones had to fit perfectly together. We in Christ are the fulfilment of the law. In the Book of Joshua, it is not clear if the stones were part of the altar or not, but the Book of Deuteronomy says it was. The altar was white, and the stones

fitted perfectly into each other. That is very similar to the time when Solomon built the temple at Jerusalem. King Solomon cut the stones at the quarry, where they were perfectly sized to prohibit any stonework or implements at the temple mount (1 Kings 5:18; 6:7). Paul says that we are a building perfectly fitting together, a holy temple belonging to our Lord (Ephesians 2:21). The work of God in us is faultless. We are complete in Him, and as the stones in this chapter are perfectly joined together.

We are built with flawless stones needing no implements due to our rebirth. That will be questioned by many who rightfully agree we are not perfect. Many a time, we need to distance ourselves from our blemished world and see ourselves as perfect in Christ. We can study ourselves and notice many shortcomings, but to God we are perfect.

In the Book of Deuteronomy 27:12-13, the Israelites had to be separated, with six tribes of Israel on Mount Ebal and the other six tribes on Mount Gerizim. It is difficult to distinguish between the two groups, or who is vulnerable to the curses and who will receive the blessings.

It is impossible to assume that Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin received all the blessings and no curses. Similarly, there is no proof in Scripture that Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali received all the curses. Some may argue and say that Judah was blessed and not the ten tribes. I believe the curses and the blessings ought to be read together as they are one. We can find similar examples in Ephesians 1:1, where Paul says that he writes to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. There is no difference between the faithful and the saints, and in the new translations of the Bible it reads: ‘To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus’ (NIV). It is clear that Paul has no intent to distinguish them. Two parallel verses can be read as one, as they are similar. We need to amend the blessings to the curses and read them as one.

Later in Israel’s history, there was a notable difference between the two and the ten tribes, but at large there was no other event to distinguish them. In Joshua 8, it says that a part of the nation was to sit on the slopes of Mount Gerizim and the other half on Mount Ebal, and he blessed them all. If the people of Israel persisted in being obedient to His Word, they could expect the blessings; but if they chose to ignore Him, they could expect the worst.

The gathering was at Shechem and not at Jerusalem, which was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin and Judah. Shechem is entrusted to the tribe of Ephraim, who had the firstborn right. At present, it is part of the West Bank that used to be Samaria. Our Lord frequented this area many a time, and at the same place He met the Samaritan woman.

Wherever in the Bible Shechem is mentioned, it speaks of our present dispensation, unfolding the promises God once made to Ephraim and our Patriarchs. Generally speaking, today the Christians are absorbed by the history of Jerusalem and how it unfolded during the time of our Lord. They never considered the importance of these two mounts at Shechem. The Christians today are totally unaware that the firstborn right of Ephraim is fulfilled in the Church. At the time of the rapture, the duties of the real firstborn (Church) will be sanctioned in both heaven and earth.

Joshua's duty was to 'firstly bless the people of Israel' (Joshua 8:33, RSV). We as the Church are the first to share in Christ's blessings.
The Church has its roots in Ephraim, and that is repeatedly validated with truths captured in the history of Shechem or the two mounts.
Firstly, we need to notice that there are two mounts instead of one. The firstborn has a double share, and that is continually established by the two.
The one mountain means 'bald', and the other mountain means 'cursed', signifying Ephraim's position today. In the history of the 10 tribes, they were indeed cursed when they were ushered into the Assyrian exile. Instead, the tribe of Judah was blessed, which is a paradox. We can question whether Ephraim, that was 'cut off' and 'cursed', is not blessed after all. Many are blindfolded, thinking the history of the 10 tribes ended with their exile, but that is so wrong.
Even after being cursed and sent out from the land of Israel, they did get blessed. This surely reminds us of the dream Pharaoh had in Genesis 41, where he dreamt of the seven lean cows who ate the seven fat cows, but surprisingly the lean cows remained skinny. Similarly, the same happened to the seven thin and blighted ears of grain that ate the seven fat and plump ears of grain, but they remained slim. All the dreams of Jacob and Pharaoh were double, as here Pharaoh was dreaming of the cows and grain. That is the key to highlight the importance of our dispensation. Now, the 10 lost tribes of Israel are cursed and lean while living in the Assyrian exile, but they are blessed. They are fat and plump but remain lean. We can trace their blessings in the affluent Western Europe and North America, and undeniably they are the backbone of the Church today. Christians are scattered all over the world, and yet they live far away from the Promised Land or Israel. We are blessed, even though we are 'cut off' and cursed.
That is similarly true of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is a symbol of the Church today, as she portrays the 10 tribes of Israel. It was told that she would have a son, but she replied that it was impossible, as she knew no man. Regardless of having 'no man' or being 'cut off', she did conceive. She was well aware that, despite her disposition, she would be blessed by the 'Son'. That proved true, as there was no real relationship between Joseph and Mary, but yet she is blessed. The Child Jesus that was born at Bethlehem is the Son who will redeem the world. Similarly, today the world is waiting for the 'son' or the Church, as that will end the plight of our world today (Romans 8:19). In silence, the promises that God once made to Mary were fulfilled when the Lord Jesus was born, and equally, on the quiet, His promises are fulfilled in the Church today.
The pinnacle of Ephraim's blessings is to be part of the Church, fulfilling his prime firstborn right; but once after the rapture, the tribe will still have an important role in Christ's Kingdom on earth. To Ephraim, the promises will be fulfilled twice.
It is strange that after Israel gathered at the two mounts, the significance of this history is forgotten. Shechem with its two mountains had no importance, except that it was part of the history of the Samaritans. Samaria was the capital of the 10 tribes of Israel after they split from the

two tribes. Samaria with the 10 tribes had the firstborn rights, and the question today is whether Samaria was part of Israel or not. Similarly, we may ask whether Israel is the Church or not? Strictly speaking, they don't. The parallel is that the Samaritans in the time of the Lord Jesus may have been a type of the Church. When our Lord Jesus was rejected by Judah or the Jewish nation, He frequently went to Samaria. There He felt more comfortable. Going to the Sea of Galilee, He often followed a detour from Jerusalem to visit Shechem. Once, being without His disciples, He quietly had a conversation with a woman from Samaria. He met her at the well that was part of a piece of land Jacob once gave to Joseph. Any well in the Bible epitomises the promises of God. They are the promises God once gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Isaac's whole history evolved around the many wells, as he continually opened the old wells that were clogged by Abraham's enemies. Water is life, and at the well the Lord Jesus asked the woman whether there was any water. In short, the Lord Jesus enquired of the woman if there was any life in the promises He once made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. She eagerly awaited the blessings and soon realised they were invested in Him. Christ is the fulfilment of all the promises, and He will provide the living waters that will flow for all eternity.

The promises once invested in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be nurtured in Himself. The woman wanted the water, and it was freely given to her. She recognised the Lord Jesus as the Lord of the Samaritans, being acquainted with the five Books of Moses! She inquired of the Lord whether Abraham offered Isaac at Jerusalem (Mount Moriah) or at Shechem (Mount Gerizim).

Her next question was whether they had to worship God at Jerusalem or Shechem. Until that time, the Jews as a nation never recognised the Lord as their Messiah and never did. The woman waited for the Messiah and recognised Him at once, and she left with great excitement to go to the city.

The people living in the town listened to her and believed that the Lord Jesus was their Messiah. They believed not because of the woman, but they were convinced when they heard His Words. They recognised the Lord as the 'Lord of the Samaritans'. Great emphasis is placed on the 'woman', as she is a type of the 10 lost tribes or the mainstay of the early Church. Once they accepted Christ, her calling ended. She remains unknown and not once is she named. In the quiet, the 10 tribes of Israel did play an important role in spreading the Gospel, but presently they are in the background. Similarly, today we are not bothered if we are part of the 10 lost tribes or not. We are absorbed with the message we heard from the Lord Himself, and to us, how it came about is of no issue.

Retracing the history of Joseph, we read that he too was forgotten. He prophesied the butler would be freed on the third day, and in return he asked the butler for a favour: to remind Pharaoh of his plight. The butler was freed to become the chief butler in Pharaoh's house.

Similarly, today the Church is blessed, but sadly the butler overlooked Joseph, who prophesied everything correctly. They have forgotten the importance of the 10 tribes, as they are still 'cut off' and their plight

remains in the balance. In the end, the baker did get killed, and it is the plight of Judas or the Jewish nation of today.
We as the butler are blessed with Christ's resurrection on the third day. Regardless of this, the importance of Joseph or his plight remains forgotten (Genesis 40). The last verse of this chapter ends with great disappointment. The difficulties the woman of Samaria, Joseph or the ten tribes had are forgotten, as their significance as part of God's mysteries is overlooked. Our blessing today is not because of Judah, but rather it is mysteriously hidden in Ephraim.
Abraham was the first patriarch to choose Shechem as his first resting place in the land of Canaan. There he built an altar (Gen. 12:7). He made war with his enemies, and afterwards, at the oaks of Mamre near Shechem, he met Melchizedek (Gen. 14). Similarly, today in our dispensation, we can reflect on Christ's victory over Satan, as Abraham once did at Shechem.
We are privileged to commune with Christ, who is both our High Priest and King. In the Book of Hebrews, we know Christ as Melchizedek, being both our High Priest and King.
Similarly, Jacob followed the same route as Abraham from Haran to Shechem. Esau, thinking that he had been robbed of his firstborn right, forced Jacob to return to the land of Abraham's ancestors to work for Laban. He worked there for 20 years. After this long time, Esau did recognise Jacob as the firstborn. Jacob then followed a similar path to that of his grandfather Abraham.
When Jacob journeyed from Haran, he settled at Shechem and bought the land on which he had camped for a hundred pieces of silver (Gen. 33:18–20). Then, as Abraham had done, he also erected an altar. Later, Jacob buried the strange gods that had been made from the earrings of their ears beneath the oak at Shechem (Gen. 35:4). This act of hiding portrays our present time of God's mystery.
The acorns are a fruit of the oak tree, and they look very similar to a circumcised nut, as half of the nut is exposed. Circumcision portrays how the promises of God are invested in the new covenant.
Joseph had two dreams before he was sold by his brothers (Gen. 37). In the first dream, bundles of grain bowed down before him, and in the other dream, the sun, moon, and 11 stars bowed down before him. Joseph's history is the climax of the Book of Genesis, answering the question that arises early in the Book of Genesis. Joseph would be the 'one' who was created in God's own likeness. This is true, as he epitomises the Church, who will be called His sons.
Joseph, by way of his many dreams, accentuates our time. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons, and undeniably he was also the firstborn. Today, we may think differently and argue that the promises of God are invested in Judah. This may sound true, but when accommodating God's mysteries, Joseph is the true firstborn, as in him are locked the truths of the Church.
The new covenant is not bestowed on the house of Judah. We, as part of the Church, are regarded as both kings and priests in Christ, or the partakers of both heaven and earth. We have a dual calling, and therefore

the importance of the ‘two’. The two dreams of Joseph speak of the time of our mystery, and obviously his brothers did not understand them (v. 10). His brothers became jealous.
Paul defines this jealousy in the Book of Romans 11, as Judah is now sidelined by the Church, and Ephraim remains its backbone.
Shortly afterwards, Jacob sent Joseph to Shechem to look for his brothers, who were supposedly there. After a long search, he did not find them at Shechem but rather at Dothan. Dothan can be translated as ‘the law’. With the entry of the new covenant after Christ’s resurrection, Judah should have been at Shechem, portraying the new covenant. Instead, they were distant, at ‘the law’ or Dothan. They were jealous and frankly got rid of him. Judaism today is unfriendly towards the Gospel and the new covenant. Early during the reign of Joseph, Judah was totally unaware of Joseph’s position. They experienced a drought, and typologically they were far away from the promises of the new covenant. Unlike the Jewish nation, the Samaritan woman was approachable to the Gospel at Shechem, and unto her the promises were fulfilled.
Shechem was one of the cities of refuge.
There were six similar cities scattered among Israel, and they were all clearly signposted. Within the cities, the priest ruled and not the king. They were Levitical cities, and the people were dependent on the judgement of the priest, not the king. Later in the Book of Joshua, those cities will be discussed in greater detail.
In the last chapter of Joshua (ch. 24), Israel visited Shechem once more. Before Moses’ death, he spoke twice in Deuteronomy to Israel, as he was well aware of the blessings that would implicate the Church. Joshua addressed the people for the last time at Shechem, again underlining the importance of our time. Joshua epitomises Joseph, as they both died at 110 years old. Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim. When Joshua died, they also buried the bones of Joseph at Shechem.
It was on the piece of land Jacob had bought for Joseph for 100 pieces of silver. There is a strong tie between the two, and all this is fulfilled in Shechem. In John 4, the woman from Samaria was standing at the very same place, close to the burial place, when our Lord met her. The promises made to the patriarchs were fulfilled in her. She was given the life-giving water that would burst forth into everlasting life.
Eleazar, the son of Aaron, also died there and was buried in the mountains of Ephraim. Eleazar portrays our present dispensation, as he was the second high priest, being the son of Aaron (24:33). Here again, we are confronted with the second generation, depicting our dispensation. They are all tied to the promises God made to Ephraim. Referring to only one passage in Scripture carries no weight, but having so many of them focuses on the importance of Ephraim or Shechem, who do picture the Church.
Where else do we read of Shechem?

- In the following Book of Judges, we read of Gideon, who refused to be crowned as king of Israel. After his death, Abimelech endeavoured to be called the king of Israel. He was sworn in by his brethren as the first king of Israel at Shechem (Jud. 9). He ruled for

three years, but it ended in great disappointment. In that chapter, we find the first parable in the Bible. The olive, fig, and vine tree refused kingship, and in the end the reign went to the thorn bush. We ought to be familiar with the thorn tree, as it speaks of the Law of Moses, and as expected, everything went wrong. However, at Shechem with the entry of the new covenant, the olive, fig, and vine tree will rule. Sadly, it is not at Jerusalem, as Jerusalem must wait until the rapture of the Church. On the quiet, this prophecy is now fulfilled.

- In Judges 21 and 22, the tribe of Benjamin was close to annihilation, as they were caught in the caves and had no wives. As a tribe, they were nearly extinct, and the remaining tribes of Israel had compassion on them and intervened. To maintain the strength of the different tribes of Israel, each daughter had to marry within her own tribe. In this history, they were saved from their plight, and it happened on their way to Shechem. There used to be a yearly festivity, and they were told to abduct the daughters of Israel when they danced. The tribe of Benjamin will be blessed once more, as he is the full brother of Joseph. It will happen in the vicinity of Joseph. The tribe of Benjamin will be ‘a light’ to the tribe of Judah, and this happened early in the Church’s history (1 Kings 11:36). We read of Paul, who was from the tribe of Benjamin, who in a remarkable way elucidated the mysteries of God. He spoke of ‘his Gospel’, and God entrusted the message to him (Rom. 2:16; 16:25; 1 Tim. 1:11).
- In 1 Kings 11 and 12, the ten and the two tribes of Israel split into two. The kingdom was given to Judah, who also had half the tribe of Benjamin. At the time of King Solomon’s death, Rehoboam went to Shechem to address the ten tribes, who refused to be ruled by him. The ten tribes who lived north of Jerusalem had to decide on the third day whether they wanted to allow Rehoboam to be their king or not. They rejected Rehoboam, as he proved to be merciless. He wished to place the yoke (law) on their backs. Instead, the ten tribes veered to Jeroboam, hailing him as their king. He did not weigh them down with the yoke. Jeroboam was crowned on the third day as the king over the ten tribes of Israel. The name Israel was not attributed to the tribe of Judah (house of David) but rather to the ten tribes. We realise that the blessings are now bestowed on the Church, who is Christ’s real firstborn. That is epitomised when Jeroboam built an altar to the Lord at Bethel. He made the golden calf.

Joshua built an altar of unhewn stones and made offerings to God (Josh. 8:30). The ascending smoke was pleasing to God, and as a whole it pictures the Church (Phil. 4:18). During a memorable time of Elijah at Carmel, we read of another altar that was completely devoured by flames, leaving nothing behind. That altar made by Elijah had twelve stones, and three times he poured water upon it. The soaked offering disappeared in flames, and this is a clear picture of the rapture of the Church, who is part of the Trinity.

We will vanish in glory, but oddly for Elijah everything ended in an anticlimax. He had to flee for his life as his life was in danger, portraying the great tribulation that speedily followed the rapture of the Church.
On the stones, he wrote a copy of the law of Moses (8:32). The first writing portrays the law or the old covenant, and the second writing portrays the new covenant. Joshua's eyes looked far ahead into the distant future when he wrote them down, being conscious of our blessings.
The leaders, officers, and judges (8:33) portray the Church, as we will rule with Christ. We, who were once aliens and foreigners, are now part of God's household (Eph. 2:19). We, as the leaders and judges, will reign with Christ.
Joshua read aloud (Strong's no. 7121) the words of the Law, and the acoustics of the valley were outstanding as it amplified the sound of His Word. The words spoken by Joshua can easily be relevant to the Church, whether it is a blessing or a curse.
The curse is that

we are dead but yet alive;
we sin daily but we are faultless in Christ;
we are not reckoned to be part of Israel, and yet we are called as such by God;
even though we are cursed, we are blessed in heaven;
at present we are scattered, living in exile, and yet we are alive to God;
we were prisoners of Satan, but now we are prisoners of Christ.

In short, we share in both the blessings and the curses (8:34)

.

Joshua 9

Typological Significance of the Gibeonites

The narrative in Joshua 9 portrays the Gibeonites—Hivites from Canaan who deceive Israel into a covenant of peace—as a profound biblical type (or symbol) pointing to deeper spiritual truths, particularly the inclusion of Gentiles in God's redemptive plan through the new covenant. Rather than condemning their deceit, the typology emphasizes their faith-driven initiative to align with God's people, foreshadowing the Church's grafting into Israel's spiritual heritage (cf. Rom. 11:17–24; Eph. 2:11–22). Below, I outline the key typological elements drawn from the passage, structured by theme for clarity. These symbols reveal God's wisdom in extending grace beyond ethnic Israel, circumventing the law, and fulfilling Abrahamic promises.1. The Gibeonites as the Gentile Remnant Seeking Inclusion

- Biblical Basis: Amid Canaanite kings uniting against Israel (Josh. 9:1–2; cf. Ps. 2; Acts 4:25–26), the Gibeonites alone pursue peace, confessing faith in Yahweh's fame (Josh. 9:9–11, 24). They cite God's acts in Egypt and against Amorite kings, echoing Rahab's testimony (Josh. 2:9–11).
- Typological Meaning: They represent Gentiles (the "nations") who recognize Christ's rejection by the world (John 1:10–12) but seek eternal life through faith. Like the Church as God's remnant amid

global opposition to Christ, the Gibeonites embody those "afar off" (Acts 2:39; Eph. 2:12–13) drawn near by grace. Their proximity (despite claiming distance) symbolizes how "lost" Israelites/Gentiles are unexpectedly close in God's plan—e.g., early Christians from the ten tribes or Paul's dual Roman-Jewish identity (Acts 22:3, 28).
- Key Contrast: Canaanites convene to destroy (war); Gibeonites convene to merge (covenant). This mirrors Herod and Pilate uniting against Jesus, yet a faithful remnant endures.

2. Deception and Covenant: Faith Over Legalism
- Biblical Basis: The Gibeonites fabricate a distant origin (Josh. 9:4–6, 11), leading to a sworn treaty (v. 15). Joshua later curses them to servitude (v. 23), but honours the oath despite Israel's grumbling (vv. 18–21; cf. Deut. 29:11–12).
- Typological Meaning: Deceit highlights human inadequacy—salvation isn't earned by honesty under law but received through bold faith in God's promises (Josh. 9:24; cf. Gen. 12:1–3). The covenant (mentioned 5 times, symbolizing the fifth dispensation of grace) types the new covenant (Jer. 31:31–34; Heb. 8:8–12), open to all believers regardless of origin ("far" or "near"). It bypasses Mosaic exclusion of Canaanites, prefiguring Gentiles as co-heirs (Eph. 3:6). The unbreakable oath despite flaws underscores God's faithfulness (Rom. 11:29), provoking Jewish jealousy (Rom. 11:11).
- Spiritual Lesson: Adhering strictly to law condemns the Gibeonites (and us); typology invites seeing grace's "hidden things" (e.g., Church mysteries revealed through Paul, Col. 1:26–27).

3. Symbols of the Old Life and New Creation

Symbol in Narrative	**Description (Josh. 9:4–5, 12–13)**	**Typological Interpretation**
Ambassadors on Donkeys	Envoys travel as "hinges" (Heb. for ambassador) on burdened beasts.	Donkeys type the remnant under law's load, seeking freedom (cf. Saul's lost donkeys, 1 Sam. 9; Jesus on donkey, Luke 19:28–30). Ambassadors as "door hinges" symbolize pivoting from death to life via covenant.
Old, Patched Clothes & Sackcloth	Worn garments evoking mourning.	Old man/flesh (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22); sackcloth as death/repentance. New covenant clothes us in Christ's righteousness (Isa. 61:10; Rev. 19:8).
Mouldy Bread & Dry Provisions	Stale food unfit for sustenance.	Old covenant "leaven" of law, unable to nourish (John 6:35); contrasts manna's freshness, pointing to Christ as living

		bread.
Old, Patched Wineskins	Cracked containers for wine.	Old life under law bursts with new wine (Holy Spirit/life; Matt. 9:16–17). New wineskins = renewed vessels preserving grace (2 Cor. 5:17).
Worn Sandals/Shoes	Patched footwear moulded to the traveller.	Earthly walk of the old self (Josh. 5:15; Exod. 3:5); removal = dying to self (John the Baptist's unworthiness, Mark 1:7). New shoes = gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15).

- Overall: These depict hopeless pre-conversion state (Eph. 2:1–3), yet their "suffering" impression lures mercy. Post-covenant, they embody rebirth: from aliens to household members (Eph. 2:19), with wine (life) preserved in new skins.

4. Servitude as Blessed Humility: Woodcutters and Water Carriers
   - Biblical Basis: Cursed to "woodcutters and water carriers" for Israel's altar/tabernacle (Josh. 9:21, 23, 27; cf. Deut. 29:11). Later, the tabernacle ark resides at Gibeon (1 Chron. 21:29).
   - Typological Meaning: Lowly roles exalt new covenant service—humble like Christ (Phil. 2:5–8; Matt. 20:26–28).
     - Woodcutters: Axe law's yoke for freedom (2 Kings 6:1–7; Ps. 18:29); build altar as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1).
     - Water Carriers: Wells type Abrahamic promises (life/grace; Gen. 21:30; 26:18–33). Clogged by Philistines (law/enemies), reopened by Isaac (Church type, Gal. 4:28–31). Gibeonites "unclog" for Gentiles, ensuring grace flows unhindered.
   - Link to Church: Foreigners sharing Israel's blessings (Deut. 29:12); tabernacle at Gibeon prefigures indwelling Spirit in believers (1 Cor. 3:16), not Jerusalem—until Christ's millennial return.
5. Integration into Benjamin and Broader Redemptive Arc
   - Biblical Basis: Gibeon allocated to Benjamin (Josh. 18:25); from this tribe come Saul (persecutor) and Paul (apostle to Gentiles, Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:5).
   - Typological Meaning: Benjamin as "one tribe" lamp for David (1 Kings 11:36) types the faithful remnant (Jews + Gentiles) preserving God's name. Paul embodies Gibeonite duality: "far" (Gentile mission) yet "near" (Jewish heritage). Battle at Gibeon (Josh. 10:12—"Sun, stand still") halts time, typing prophetic pause (Dan. 9:24–27) where Church wars spiritually (Eph. 6:12).
   - Culmination: Gibeonites' peace (Heb. shalom, wholeness; v. 15) fulfils Abraham's promises (Gen. 12:3), tearing the veil (Matt. 27:51) and uniting Jew/Gentile in Christ (Eph. 2:14–16). On the third day (Josh. 9:16; Gen. 42:18; resurrection), death yields to life.

In essence, the Gibeonites typify the Church: deceived outsiders saved by faith, humbled in service, yet exalted as co-heirs in grace's dispensation.

This "quiet plan" (v. 16) unveils God's unsearchable wisdom (Rom. 11:33), inviting all to the covenant banquet regardless of pedigree. For deeper study, cross-reference with Ephesians 2–3 or Romans 11.

REVIEW

In this chapter, the Gibeonites resorted to deception to save themselves. They were viewed as Israel's enemies, belonging to the Canaanites. God demanded that Israel wipe them out, but here the Gibeonites saved themselves through sheer trickery. In the end, they belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, as Gibeon was allocated to their region. The question here is whether they belonged to Israel or not.

The timing was critical, as all the heathen people to the west of the River Jordan agreed to destroy all Israel. The people living in the proximity of Gibeon, including some of the Hivites (v. 7), gathered that it was impossible. They in turn devised a plan to save themselves, realising God was on Israel's side.

This chapter commences with the words, 'the kings gathered themselves to make war with Israel' (v. 1).

This is often cited in Scripture, and a well-known passage is Psalm 2. This same psalm is quoted in Acts 4:25–26, when Peter said that the kings joined together and with 'one mind' they crucified our Lord. At that time, Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Jews, and all the Gentiles gathered themselves against Him. Having a common enemy, both Herod and Pilate became friends. Now there is a very similar attitude, as many nations refuse Him. However, there will always be a remnant, as during the time of Joshua or whatever time in history, as there was always a cluster of people living in faith. All the nations living in the land of Canaan opposed Israel, but quietly the Gibeonites desired peace. It is very similar today: the world refuses Christ, but the Church is His remnant. In this chapter, the Gibeonites are the remnant from amongst the nations.

John 1 says our Lord created our world, and as such they did not recognise Him. However, if any today, as the Gibeonites in Joshua's time, are willing to accept Him, they have eternal life. The world rejected Him, but His remnant will always be blessed.

As the Canaanites convened together to end the exodus of Israel, similarly the Gibeonites convened with the intent to merge with Israel. They shrewdly tricked Israel, but in the end they were blessed. It was based on lies, but their faith played a vital role. Their testimony was very similar to Rahab's (Josh. 2:9–11), who acknowledged the God of Israel. She realised that Israel's God was the only true God. The Gibeonites wanted such a God. They spoke the following words to Joshua:

'From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard of His name, and all that He did in Egypt, and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites … Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, "Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, 'We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us.'"' (Josh. 9:9–11)

In the Hebrew language, the word ‘name’ (Strong’s no. 8034) does not merely ‘name’ a person, but it also validates Him as reputable, having great fame and glory. They remembered what God did for Israel in Egypt, even if it was forty years ago. They desired to live amongst them in peace, signing a treaty with Joshua. The Israelites were lured by thinking they were from a far country, but they lived in close proximity to Jerusalem. Later, Joshua discovered their story was fabricated, but after he had made a covenant with them. Afterwards, he questioned them as to why they did this. The Gibeonites in return told Joshua they were aware of the words Moses spoke, even if it was forty years prior to Israel entering the land of Canaan. They believed that God would give Israel all the land He promised them (v. 24). The land was not only promised to Israel, but also to any person who trusts the living God.

The Gibeonites are the heathen who will share in the blessings of Israel. They believed in Him, and the next question is whether they were from far away or close by?

At first it seemed they were from far away, but in fact they lived close to them. Similarly, after Christ’s resurrection, the people thought the heathen Christians were from far away, but surprisingly to many they were close, as they mostly belonged to the ten lost tribes of Israel.

If we adhere strictly to the laws of Moses, we will condemn the Gibeonites and fail to understand their true typological import. The people observing the law may argue that it would have been more proper if they had taken an honest approach. How can they be saved through deceit?

We don’t need to condemn their approach, but rather we need to find the meaning behind their deception. We, as the Church, ought to be regarded as the Gibeonites, as we are blessed by being called the true Israelites. The word ‘covenant’ is frequently found in this chapter, and since the treaty was signed, our true heritage is known. Early in the Church’s history, the truths pertaining to our dispensation were not known, but now, especially through Paul, the mysteries concerning God’s plan are known.

Today, many believe that no mention of the Church is made in the Old Testament. That is wrong, since they read them too superficially. Once we delve deeper into the Scripture, we find frequent truths guiding us to our dispensation. The Israelites were totally ignorant of the plans the Gibeonites made in the quiet.

The word ‘Gibeon’ can be translated as ‘a high place’, and that is true today, as the Church is prominent, enjoying the greatest blessings of Israel. The Hivites are somehow related to the word ‘Eve’, meaning ‘to impart life’, as she is the mother of all living. Both words stem from the same root word (Strong’s nos. 2332/3). The Gibeonites were spared by signing a peace treaty, allowing them to live (v. 15). This portrays our rebirth, a concept locked away in these few verses. The Gibeonites resorted to deception, deploying their ambassadors. In the Hebrew, the word ‘ambassador’ means ‘a hinge’, as the hinge of a door. They had to clinch a deal, as many lives depended on them. The intent was to secure life, so a better treaty was made.

Early in the Church's history, God also steered the events away from the Jewish nation who rejected Him. Refusing Christ, He gathered a remnant from amongst the Gentiles to provoke the Jewish nation to jealousy (Rom. 11:11). Later in the same chapter, Paul admired God's wisdom:
'Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!' (Rom. 11:33)
God is our ambassador, and He has devised a plan for us.
The ambassadors rode on a donkey, and in the Bible the donkey always portrays the remnant. They are constantly burdened with the load of the law and prefer to be freed. They continually seek freedom, and our Lord was riding on a donkey going down the Mount of Olives (Luke 19). The donkeys can listen well, and besides, they can also speak. Early in Saul's history before becoming king, he feverishly looked for the donkeys he had lost. Throughout Israel's history, they are mentioned frequently.
The men had weathered saddlebags and old, patched wineskins. The sandals on their feet were worn and patched, and they had old clothes. Their bread and food supply were dry and mouldy.
The men had both bread and wine, but it was the 'old and spent'. It depicts the nature of our earthly life, as we were hopelessly lost. The weathered saddlebags depict the law, and we find them mentioned in the Gospels. With the entry of Christ's Kingdom, the disciples are advised to put the new wine into new wineskins, as the old will spoil the new. The old skins will tear.
'Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved' (Matt. 9:17).
The previous verse (v. 16) says that the new clothes should not be mended with any old material, as the fabric is totally different. Wine is life, and the wineskin keeping the wine portrays our life. We are blessed with the wine, as we are part of the total new creation, and we don't need the 'old'. With our rebirth, we got rid of the old wineskins, and adhering to the law will only make the 'Spirit' leak from the old wineskins.
The Gibeonites gave the impression that they were suffering, and that is true if they hinder Christ from entering their lives. Being clothed in sackcloth epitomises mourning and death. The loose-fitting clothes are shapeless and do not accentuate our body contours. The bread was mouldy and incapable of sustaining life.
The shoes epitomise our walk on earth. Joshua saw God as an angel (Josh. 5), and he was told to remove his shoes, as the place he stood on was holy. Similar was said to Moses. To remove our shoes is to get rid of the old man, including his walk. The shoes are moulded to our body, and once we died, we got rid of them. If any other person had to put on old shoes, it implies that he embodies the dead person. Similar to John the Baptist, who thought he was not worthy to undo the sandal straps of his Lord (Mark 1:7). It implies that John the Baptist was unworthy to wear the shoes of his Lord or to continue His mission on earth.

The envoy from Gibeon headed to Joshua at Gilgal, knowing if this strategy failed, they would die. They asked for a peace treaty with the God of Israel, faking that they came from a distant country.
In the first message since Christ's resurrection, Peter addressed the people and said:
'For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call' (Acts 2:39).
Those living afar off will heed the message. The word 'promise' is related to the word 'covenant'. Joshua in this history epitomises Christ, who bestowed mercy on them. Paul reflects our previous disposition, and it is likened to the Gibeonites. '
Previously you were without Christ (Joshua), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world' (Eph. 2:12).
We are no longer strangers and are part of the new covenant or Christ. Joshua epitomised Christ, and the Church is wholly part of the commonwealth of Israel. The Lord Jesus was born as part of Israel, but His redemptive work entails the complete world.
In verse 7, the Gibeonites requested a covenant, thinking it could be arranged easily once Joshua believed they came from far away (v. 7). This is no reason for the treaty, as only their faith in the living God of Israel will suffice. Joshua treasured the covenant not because he believed they lived far away, but because they confessed their faith in the living God of Israel. The new covenant is not exclusively for Israel alone, but for any believer who believes, whether living close by or far away. The Bible clearly substantiates this. Once we establish that the salvation of Christ did appear to the heathen nations, we didn't exclude the Israelites, and vice versa is also correct. This principle was true for Abraham or for any who wishes to follow in his footsteps of faith.
Our interest is to be part of the new covenant and to be called the servants of Christ, and similarly here the Gibeonites wished to be their servants. We presented ourselves to Christ, and He accepted us.
In this chapter, the word 'treaty' is mentioned five times. The letter 5 denotes our fifth dispensation of grace. It conveys the hidden things. Whatever happened at Gilgal happened in the quiet when Joshua signed the peace treaty. Living in peace is living in harmony, becoming one with the other person. This thought is locked away in the Greek word 'peace' (Strong's no. 1515).
'So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live, and the rulers of the congregation swore to them' (v. 15).
The words 'peace', 'covenant', and 'life' are frequent words associated with the new covenant. This is based on the promises God made to Abraham.
In Ephesians 2, it says that we were dead in sin and that God gave us life. Verse 12 says that previously we had no hope, foreigners having a life void of Christ, as the Gibeonites. Now in Christ or Joshua, we are totally part of Israel. There used to be a middle wall between the Israelites and the Gentile nations. The wall that used to mark Israel was the law, but

now it is gone. It is broken down, and all our promises are now invested in the promises God once made to Abraham. That circumvents the law.
He is our peace, and both the believing Jews and the heathen nations are drawn together under this treaty.
On the day of Pentecost, many Jews assembled together, and they were amazed, hearing the Gospel in their own foreign tongue. Once again, we may ask whether they were from far away or close by. It does not matter, as both are true. The Gospel is meant for persons who live either close or distant.
Similarly, we or the Gibeonites, who lived far away, are now brought close under the umbrella of Christ or Joshua. We all have one access to the Father, and we are no longer aliens, but part of the house of God, of which Christ is the chief cornerstone. God's secret plan is that the Gentiles should have an equal share with Israel, sharing all the riches inherited via His promises (Eph. 3:6). The Church is built on the simple promises God once made to Abraham, and that is fulfilled in Christ. He is the end of the law. It is clearly proved by our Lord's death on the cross. Then the curtain tore that used to separate the Holiest of the Ark of the Covenant from the sanctuary (Matt. 27:51).
Joshua made peace with them, and they shared in the household of Israel. That happened after three days (9:16). We ought to be familiar with the third day, as on this day Christ rose from the dead to bring about the change.
In verse 18, there seems to be a problem amongst the Israelites, as the people of Israel grumbled against their leaders. Nothing could be changed, as a treaty had been signed. In the past and even now, there is jealousy between the Jewish nation and the Church, and this malice is also found amongst the Christians. Paul addressed this complexity in Romans 11. There ought to be no dissimilarities. Joshua agreed to 'allow them to live', and they are the similar words Joseph once spoke to his brothers on the third day.
'On the third day, Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live"' (Gen. 42:18). Israel had an edict, and the rulers told them,
'Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them' (v. 21). In the last verse of this chapter (v. 27), Joshua reiterates that their deal includes doing service at the altar of the Lord.
The Gibeonites argued that they were happy with their plight and that they were willing to assist the household of Israel. They were pleased, knowing they were saved from a certain death by doing service in the tabernacle. I believe they also helped by providing the people of Israel with goods.
Strangely as it may sound, but later in the history of David, the 'ark of the tabernacle' did stand at Gibeon before it was brought to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 21:29). Similarly, today the temple of God is not at Jerusalem but rather at Gibeon. It will be taken back to Jerusalem once Christ's Kingdom is settled during the Millennium.
The task of the Gibeonites was to hack wood, and strangely the students at the school of the prophets of Elisha also had to hack the wood. They

had to axe the wood, as their school was getting too small, desiring more freedom and space (2 Kings 6:1–7). Living in a restricted place is like living under the yoke of the law to confine us. They desired freedom of space and movement, and that is only possible if they abandon the ‘old’ to live under the new covenant. It is like leaping over a wall that used to restrain them (Ps. 18:29). Freedom is a frequent phrase belonging to the new covenant. With the entry of the new covenant, things went wrong, and likewise to the students who axed the wood. The momentum of the axe caused an accident, but miraculously the iron floated later above the water, and they snatched it easily.

Besides being woodcutters, the Gibeonites also had to dig the wells. In the Bible, a well conveys the promises of God with regard to the new covenant. Any well is a source of water, and it promises life. In the history of the patriarchs, the wells are frequently mentioned. It portrays a far greater connotation than the superficial. In the history of Isaac alone, the wells are mentioned ten times. He continually had to reclaim the wells that somehow got clogged by his enemies. The history of the many wells epitomises the promises of God. Isaac reclaiming all the wells proves that the promises of Abraham are invested in him. In one such instance, we read of Abraham claiming the well at Beersheba (Gen. 21:30), and strangely Isaac also reclaimed the same well to find water (Gen. 26:32–33). During the time of the law or Moses, the people forgot the promises God once made to Abraham. That caused the wells to clog, stifling the effervescent flow of water or life. Today it is similar. We accepted God on the basis of the new covenant, but many revert back to the law, thinking it will satisfy God. Actually, they clog His promises. If any dare to open them again, they will war with our enemy Satan, or Abimelech, as in the history of Abraham and Isaac. We are guaranteed the effervescent life once we solely rely on the promises of His grace and shun the law that will always stunt our growth.

‘And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had clogged them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them’ (Gen. 26:18).

The promises that God once made to Abraham were rekindled when Isaac opened them yet again. In the New Testament, Isaac symbolises the Church, and Ishmael the Israelites living under the law (Gal. 4). Today, the old covenant with Abraham is revived, and that is realised in the resurrected Christ. It circumvents the law.

The woodcutters and water carriers epitomise those who are reliant on the promises of God. We, as the Church, can value our blessing, as we are freed from the law. We may esteem the Gibeonites as slaves, but God sees them as blessed. During the time of the law, the wells or the promises of Abraham were forgotten, and many of his wells were clogged up by the enemy. The promises of the third dispensation were soon forgotten. It is simple to open them if we adhere to the principles of His grace, but reverting back to the law will merely clog all the arteries of God’s grace.

Moses previously mentioned the foreigners who would remain to be the woodcutters and water carriers (Deut. 29:11). Somehow he must have known. The foreigners will share in the blessings of Israel (Deut. 29:12). This concludes all the verses in the Bible where the woodcutters and water carriers are mentioned.
Joshua cursed them (Josh. 9:23) with the daunting task of always remaining servants to Israel. Our Lord constantly reminded His disciples that those who wish to be the greatest need to humble themselves and work as a servant. Nearly all the apostles spur us to be obedient and ready to serve others. Even though the Gibeonites had a low esteem amongst the Israelites, in God's eyes it was totally different. They were responsible for the water or the life-giving water, symbolising the new covenant.
The Gibeonites became part of Benjamin, and from that tribe King Saul was born, and later the Apostle Paul. Benjamin remained with Judah after the two and the ten tribes split. It is said:
'And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there' (1 Kings 11:36).
This was fulfilled by Paul, who was a Roman and yet a Jew. We may ask if he was 'from close' or from 'far away'. Both are true, as with the Gibeonites.
Following this remarkable history of Gibeon, we read in the next chapter that the ensuing battle was clinched at Gibeon. Moreover, in verse 12 we have read the well-known verse, 'Sun, stand still at Gibeon'. If the sun remains fixed in the skies, then the time stood still. Currently, we are now living between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week of Daniel, and the prophetic calendar is fixed for Israel. During our interlude, we battle in heaven against the forces of Satan (Eph. 6:12).

Joshua 10

This long chapter unfolds the battle at Gibeon, which speeded Israel's progress into the land of Canaan. It was not Israel's idea to incite their enemy, but rather it was the enemies' initiative to retaliate, hoping to teach them a lesson. That battle staggered them as Israel got involved, conquering cities to the south of Gibeon. v. 28 The skirmish between the Gibeonites and the surrounding Canaanites set off this great victory. In the previous chapter, we discovered that the Gibeonites shared in the blessings of Israel and typologically it clearly envisaged the Church today. The import of the day is centred on us or Gibeon. The king from Jerusalem spurred the surrounding kings to war with Gibeon in revenge, as the five kings of the Amorites were too frightened to wrestle with Israel. Joshua listened to their request and promptly heeded the distress of the Gibeonites, as he honoured the treaty he made with them. The night before the battle, Israel's armies quietly descended on their enemies, who were stunned, not expecting them. This battle took merely a day to decide. In this history, the sun stood still in mid heaven, and it did not set for a complete day. 'Then Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the

Lord delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, “O sun, stand still at Gibeon, And O moon in the valley of Aijalon.”’ v. 12 I believe that the day may have lasted at least 48 hours. In no way can we be sure. To begin with, I will tell you a story of the NASA space centre at Maryland. They allegedly ran their computer back and forth spanning centuries, and unexpectedly it came to a halt. That meant something was wrong; either with the information fed into it or with the results. They believed that the ‘interruption’ in the computer system was caused by the ‘lost day.’ Once they added the lost day, the computer started running again but then halted. The reason is they were ignorant of Joshua’s ‘extra day.’ It was not a complete day.

Apparently (so the story goes) the computers only found 23 hours and 20 minutes missing. They discovered 40 minutes were still unaccounted for. The Sunday-school-going scientist suggested the extra time in 2 Kings 20. At that moment, King Hezekiah stared death in the eyes, and longed for respite. He asked for a sign from Heaven. God then made the Sun move back ten degrees—or exactly 40 minutes! That evidence was fed into the computers, and once more they started running smoothly again.

The story sounds great, and it is reasonably impressive in the telling. The problem is: it is totally false and fabricated from beginning to end. This account was published in many religious papers thinking it would substantiate God’s Word, but in reality it harmed it more. The people tend to think we are easily swayed by any explanation. What really offends me is that the scientists believe that they can account for every lost minute! We are mere human beings and in no way can our estimations delve into the distant past.

Now the people and many Christians ridicule the miracle that the sun and moon froze in mid heaven. They deem that this is impossible for the ‘revolving’ earth to come to a sudden halt. I believe that God made the laws of nature and He can also manipulate them to allow the sun and the moon to freeze.

If any today do believe in Joshua’s account, they think the earth stopped rotating and not the sun? Or did the sun stand still? Until the time of Copernicus men believed that the sun and the moon rotated around the earth, and they easily explained all natural phenomena. That is in contrast to what people believe today. Technically speaking, to argue whether the earth rotates around the sun, or the sun around the earth, is pointless. Whether the platform is moving in relation to the passing train or the train in relation to the platform makes no difference. This example is argued in the ‘train, platform experiment’ in Einstein’s theory of relativity.

I would rather trust God’s Word as we have no alternative than to believe that both the moon and the sun rotate around the earth. God froze them in mid heaven. Even today at NASA they calculate that the earth is motionless when calculating the movements of the rocket around the earth. It is difficult to calculate if both the earth and the rockets are in motion. That day was surely miraculous but less so when it is compared to other miracles in the Bible. The question is not whether this happened or not, as there are different accounts of the event in the book of Jasher. 10:13

During David’s time, that book is mentioned. 2Sam. 1:18 The Bible is filled with miracles and to deem them impossible because we are incapable of grasping them is wrong. Generally speaking, the people today believe that they are knowledgeable and talented enough to explain everything. They equate themselves to God. A miracle is called a miracle because we cannot explain it. Our scientific milieu snubs them, and that is our foolishness. We may ask the question why the great miracle and what is it really necessary? I don’t believe it was to gain extra time to overpower the enemy. God was able to surprise them in many different ways; by making them drop down dead, or allowing the angels of heaven to slay them or by sending fire from heaven as on previous occasions. The complexity ought to be, why did God allow that miracle to happen, and what is the underlying significance? For some reason that day was truly unique as mentioned in the following verse. ‘There had been no day like it before or since, when the Lord obeyed the voice of a man.’ v. 14

The reason for that miracle is to portray God’s work in our dispensation. God promised us victory and even though we live in an evil world, we will triumph. Our world is governed by Satan and his hierarchy, as he is the god of our age. Gal. 1:4 In the past God did concern Himself with our world, but ever since Christ’s crucifixion, He rejected the world. Since they abandoned Him on the cross, He did withdraw Himself and the world is left to Satan’s devices. It is swamped in darkness and yet during our dispensation there is light. Even though we live in a condemned world, God kept us on earth for a purpose, but He will protect us from the evil one. John17:15

Even though we are caught up in a battle, we are safeguarded. We may prefer a life without Satan’s meddling, but God wishes to mature us with our daily battles. His idea is to prepare us to become His sons, and it will happen once we are spiritually mature. Satan’s continual assaults will benefit us. If there is no hardship, then living a life of faith is meaningless. Everything will be to our benefit even though we detest our daily conflicts in life. Somehow we got involved in the fight but we will succeed.

Satan walks around like a roaring lion wishing to fight us, but we defend God’s promises. Our battle is against the 5 kings of the Amorites. The number 5 conveys unseen spiritual truths whether relating to God or to Satan. The number 4 speaks of our perishable earth, but the number 5 has a far greater connotation. The five on the left denotes the powers of Satan and a five on the right denote the powers of Christ. In the parable of the 10 virgins, 5 had oil and the other 5 had no oil. Matt. 25

We are dependent on the power or the grace that emanates from the throne of God, but the history of the 5 kings portrays the powers of Satan. Besides the Amorites always speak or whisper, conveying the thoughts of Satan or his many demons. ‘Amar’ means to speak or whisper in our ears. The word ‘spirit’ is linked to the word ‘inspiration.’ The ‘whispering in our ears’ seems to motivate us. Where do we get all our ideas from: Do they emanate from us or are they whispered into our ears? It is difficult to place our finger on the source of our thinking, as they are spiritual matters. The Amorites are spiritual powers, and our battle is against them. Eph. 6

Historically there may have been more kings than the 5 mentioned, but here the 5 is emphasised. The battle was planned not against Israel but Gibeon, as they epitomise the Church. Previously they did not belong to the household of Israel, but via a covenant they did. We were once far away from the promises of God, but now we are secured in His promises. The Church did supersede Israel, but now we are the true Israelites. The enemy attacked the Gibeonites thinking they were vulnerable, but soon it became obvious they were dealing with Israel, with Joshua at their helm. The real Joshua is the Lord Jesus and He will protect us and fight our battles.

He made a covenant with us, and He will never forsake any of us in this ensuing battle. Joshua and his army went from Gilgal denoting our rebirth. The words of verse 8 are very similar to the promises God previously made to Joshua in chapter 1. 'Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.' God reiterates His promises. During the cover of night, Joshua's army went to the Gibeonites, and they certainly surprised their enemies. They panicked and fled in a westerly direction. That is a miracle, and it relates to what our Lord is doing for us today. Satan wants to devour us as a lion, but we don't need to be alarmed. We will never defeat Satan by using his weaponry. His rules pivot around sin and the law, and giving them impetus will certainly humiliate us.

The Scripture is clear that our weaponry is spiritual and the Apostle James 4:7 said plainly: 'Submit yourselves therefore to God: Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.' Once we submit ourselves to God, we will instinctively resist Satan. With our rebirth, we accepted Christ, and we forfeited our rights on earth.

Our life was invested in Christ and not in Satan. By living a life of faith, we will repeatedly challenge him. The best is to ignore our enemy and not try to defeat him on his terms. When the enemy descended a mountainous terrain, God hurled large stones on them from heaven. In that battle, more people died from the falling stones than those killed by the army of Joshua. The Lord had a greater share in the victory with the raining hailstones.

Generally speaking rain is a blessing, but those large hailstones cursed them. The same Word of God (rain) that blesses our world became a curse. (hailstones) That will happen yet again when the Lord will speak to His enemies in His wrath. Ps. 2:5 In the book of Revelation, we read of the sword of God that appeared from His mouth. This sword (Word of God) will devour His enemies. Rev. 19:21

A hailstone in the Hebrew language is 'barad', and it is an anagram of the word 'dabar,' meaning the Word of God. When our Lord was tempted by Satan, He said four times: it is written. That is the kind of armour we need to tackle Satan.

Joshua had great faith when he commanded the sun and the moon to stand still. At that moment the sun and the moon halted in their path around the world. The sun and the moon were fixed in heaven. Time did not progress, but the clock continued to click. With Joshua's history, there is no reckoning of time and that is an attribute of our dispensation. Time

does tick but not according to God as the prophetic calendar stopped with our Lord's death and resurrection.
Once the clock starts ticking again, history will continue where it once stopped. Time will tick for Israel once they sign a treaty with their enemies. During the time of Hezekiah, the sun went back an extra 10 degrees or 40 minutes. That extra time speaks of the additional years added to Hezekiah's life, as it denotes our dispensation. Peter says that the Lord is longsuffering towards us, 2Pet. 3:9 giving us ample time to repent. In Joshua's history, the one day ended as two days.
Our dispensation is branded by the number 'two.' After our dispensation, we read of two more events that will catch our attention. Now the five kings did flee, and they were hidden in the caves at Makkedah. v. 16 In Scripture a cave is a grave signifying death. Joshua commanded his men to roll huge stones to shut the entrance to the cave, thus confining the kings inside of them.
The kings did not die, but symbolically speaking they did. Early the next morning Joshua commanded his men to fetch the 5 kings, and then he openly humiliated them. Joshua executed them by hanging them on five trees until the evening. v. 26
Similarly, we also read in the book of Revelation that Satan and his hierarchy will be thrown into a deep pit or the abyss during the Millennium. That will be his first death. At the end of the 1000-year period, or the Millennium, he will be unleashed, to be captured once more. On the 'last day' Satan will be humiliated once more, and he will then be thrown back into the same abyss. That will be his second death.
Similarly, we have read that the 5 captured kings were humiliated a second time when they were left hanging on a tree. Once dead they were thrown into the same cave. That is to portray what will happen to Satan once he is thrown back to his previous hideaway or the abyss, on the 'last day'. Time is not of the essence in the Bible, but the events are meaningful. The 5 kings hiding in the cave portrays the final demise of Satan. Today we will not defeat Satan even though the sun is fixed in heaven.
Satan's definite demise is yet future, and we will humiliate him after the rapture. Now Satan is in heaven, and we are living on earth, but in the near future it will be vice versa. At the end of the great tribulation that will last 40 years, Satan and his angels will be thrown into the abyss as the 5 kings at Makkedah.
If any people are involved with that battle, it will be the Church flanked by Christ at our side. We are His firstborn and our battle with Satan will continue once we are in heaven. On the last day, Satan will succumb, and he will perish in the abyss. There will be no memory of him as Christ with the Church will conquer him. With great grandeur, the kings were humiliated.
'Come near; put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.' v. 24 They hanged them on 5 poles as a witness to all the people. The word tree is also used in Galatians 3 v. 13 as our Lord was also cursed hanging on a tree. The book of Deuteronomy mentioned the curse. 'for anyone hanging on a tree is

cursed of God.’ 21:23 Our adversary will be slain on the cross, the same cross our Lord used to hang on.
The 2 known pillars of Satan, the law and sin, are dealt with and with the entry of the new heaven and earth, it will be done away with for good. Satan and everything it embodies is awaiting its final sentence, but we need to set our minds, thinking that it happened in the past. Yes it did with Christ’s resurrection from the dead. We know how the game and all its pieces will end, and certainly we harbour no respect for Satan. With our rapture to heaven, then Satan will be cast down to earth, realizing he has a little time. Rev. 12:12 Nonetheless we will have all the time. This chapter is clear that we will have a continual battle with Satan. That commenced once we accepted Christ, and it will end with his final demise on the ‘last day.’
We are totally enveloped in that battle and to portray this; God even made the sun and the moon stand still to symbolise the great truths of our dispensation. I believe that now there is an even greater power working in us, a power far greater than what made the sun and the moon stand still: ‘Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.’ Eph. 3:20 Satan is annoyed and yearns to unsettle any believer. We can expect our daily skirmishes. If not, it may prove that Satan is ignoring us, knowing we are worthless, not trusting God’s Word, not worth the effort.
After the battle at Gibeon, Israel went south and warred against the kings of the south. That victory ended in chapter 10.

Joshua 11

Israel continues their warfare with the kings of the north until they reached the uppermost north at Mount Hermon. Joshua 12It summarises the 31 kings that were conquered. In that summary, both king Sihon and king Og were mentioned here, even though it happened many years in the past. Both those kingdoms lie east of the river Jordan. However with all their conquest they failed to conquer the southeastern tip of the land of Canaan, and today that is known as the Gaza strip. ‘There were no Anakim left in the land of the sons of Israel; only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod some remained’ 11:22 Gaza, Gath and Ashdod are the stronghold of the Palestinians. The Anakites are the giants known by many names. Initially, they are known as the ‘sons of God,’ Gen. 6 or a breed of people, created by the angels of Satan having children with our daughters.
That happened before the flood of Noah and even afterwards. They were the giants or the Anakites. The small coastline known as Gaza was always a thorn in the flesh for Israel. Gaza always used to be known as part of the Palestinian people. Once the Romans conquered Israel in the year 70 AD, they caused great confusion by naming all of Israel Palestina.
The Palestinians living in the land were never conquered and were never subdued by the God of Israel. That never changed even until today. I am sure when Satan is cast down to earth, he will find his solace there. Until 1947, the complete Israel was known as Palestina, and being named as such they believed the land belonged to the Palestinians. Today there is a

similar confusion and the trick of the Romans in the year 70 AD seemed to have worked. Presently the Gaza strip is awkwardly named, as that ought to be called Palestina. That small stretch of land played an important role in the history of Samson, Saul and David.
Our future enemy will yet again be Goliath, and he will be one of the great giants. In total, there were 31 kings in the land of Canaan, and I believe them to be rather magistrates or cities than kingdoms. Joshua 13 This chapter divides the land east of the river Jordan, to be shared by Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh. Joshua 14 This chapter commences with unique blessings. Israel is blessed by the new generation and not the old. 'Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun allotted to Israel their inheritance.' v. 1
Here Joshua and Eleazar (priest) are blessing the people and not Moses or Aaron. Joshua personifies our Lord Jesus, who is known as Jehoshua meaning 'Jehovah is our salvation.' I previously mentioned that in my notes. Neither Moses nor Aaron blessed them as they speak of the first or the old. The old covenant 'shields' the promises of the new, but once the new is there, the old is made redundant.

For where a covenant is concerned, the death of the one who made it needs to be established. Heb. 9:15–17The death of Moses and Aaron symbolises the death of our Lord Jesus on the cross, and since then we can enjoy the freedom to share the blessings of the new in Christ.
The remaining 9½ tribes are mentioned here and not the 12, as the other 2½ tribes were already blessed on the other side of the River Jordan. They are Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh. v. 3 The Levites received no inheritance as they lived amongst the other tribes of Israel. Calculating the tribe of Levi, we are left with 11 tribes instead of the 12. There seems to be a problem, but bear in mind that Joseph counts as 2 tribes. v. 4 Both his sons Manasseh and Ephraim are regarded as tribes. In fact, there are 13 tribes of Israel, but whenever the tribes were named, there always seem to be 12 of them, as one of them is always missing. Not calculating the Levites here, we have 12 tribes. The sons of Aaron did the main service in the tabernacle and the Levites assisted them in their priestly duties.
All the Levites lived scattered amongst all the tribes of Israel, doing judicial duties. Israel had no king and the priest had to be close at hand to secure any judgement. To the Levites were allotted the six 'cities of refuge'. Hebron was one of them, and it was entrusted to Caleb as an inheritance. Amongst the tribes, Hebron was part of the tribe of Judah. Potentially it may cause problems not knowing whether the town belonged to the Levites or not. On earth, the Levites had no home as they represented the God of heaven. In all probability, Elijah was a Levite priest, as he was constantly weighed down by the Israelites. Nowhere in the Bible can we trace his lineage, but his duties do make us think that he was a priest. The people of Judah and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite approached Joshua at Gilgal. v. 6
The issue was Caleb's inheritance, as Moses did promise him a great heritage. Whilst Israel lived in the desert and spied the land of Canaan,

Caleb represented the tribe of Judah, even though he was known as a heathen. 10 of the 12 spies who spied the land of Canaan believed they were powerless to subdue their enemy with their 31 fortified cities.
The giants living in the land scared them. Joshua and Caleb firmly believed that God would enable them, in contrast to the 10. Due to Israel's stubbornness, the entire generation of Israel died in the desert apart from Caleb and Joshua. Officially the 12 spies represented all Israel, and they were not chosen at random. They were the heads of the tribes of Israel.
'So Moses sent them from the wilderness at the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the sons of Israel.' Num. 13:3
After crossing the Red Sea, Israel should have conquered the land of Israel within 2 years. They walked aimlessly in the desert, and their disbelief in God cost them dearly. They did not conquer the land of Canaan but instead the people died in the wilderness. The 12 spies who left Kadesh-barnea is today known as the wilderness at Petra. At that same place, Aaron died, shortly before Moses died at Mount Nebo.
The 12 spies studied the land and while at Hebron, Caleb noticed the Anakites, and believed that God would overpower them. However, 10 of the 12 spies were sceptical. When the spies returned, they were disillusioned, and Israel bemoaned their position, wishing they had remained in Egypt, their country of birth. Joshua and Caleb realised God could conquer the land of Canaan, but the people refused to listen to them. They trusted in democracy or the voice of the people.
Due to their stubbornness they had to continue living in the desert for another 38 years, until the complete generation died. In the end, a new generation entered the land. Heb. 3:11 Joshua represented the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb the tribe of Judah. Caleb was no Jew as he was the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite.
Being a Kenizzite, his lineage was likely from Esau. Kenaz was the grandson of Esau Gen. 36:15 and strictly speaking Caleb was an Edomite. In nature, he would be regarded as the natural firstborn on earth. The Jews today who refuse Christ have forfeited their firstborn right and consequently they are unfit to be called the firstborn on earth. If we regard our earthly powers, then Esau or the Kenizzites can claim that title as they are the natural firstborn instead of Israel. Herod was an Edomite, and he was called the king of the Jews during the time of the Lord Jesus. Esau had greater privileges on earth than Jacob, and similarly the Edomites in relation to the disbelieving Jews. Throughout the history of Israel, the Edomites had great influence on them. A disbelieving Israel had no firstborn rights on earth as their 'rights' are solely based on their faith. No faith no inheritance. Abraham would never have been blessed if it was not for his faith and similarly Israel today. Joshua epitomises the firstborn right of the believing Israelites and Caleb the natural firstborn or Esau who did believe. Strangely both epitomise the Church as Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim, the 13th tribe of Israel. Manasseh was the 12th tribe and Ephraim the younger of the two, the 13th. The number 13 looks beyond the world of the 12 and conveys the truths concerning the Church.
Similarly, Caleb was considered to be a Jew, even though his lineage proved different. In that chapter, the land is divided between the 12 tribes

of Israel, but Caleb is the first individual to receive a special inheritance. He was given land amongst the Israelites, and Hebron was given to him as part of Judah.

Significance of Hebron in Biblical Typology
Hebron emerges in Joshua as a pivotal city symbolizing faith-driven inheritance, heavenly elevation, and the Church's role in God's redemptive plan. As the highest (910m) and oldest city in Israel, allocated to Judah and entrusted to Caleb, it transcends geography to type spiritual truths: inclusion of "outsiders" via faith, refuge from judgment, and Christ's pre-millennial rule with the Church. Below is a structured summary of its key significances.1. Caleb's Inheritance: Faith Over Lineage

- Context: Caleb (son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, likely Edomite descent from Esau) spies Canaan at age 40 (Num. 13), defies the 10 fearful spies by trusting God against Anakite giants (Josh. 14:6–12). At 85, after 45 years of waiting (38 in wilderness + 7 in conquest), he claims Hebron as promised (Num. 14:24; Deut. 1:36), driving out three Anakites (Josh. 15:14).
- Significance: Caleb's "heathen" origins (name means "dog" or "caged exile") highlight true "Judah" as inward faith (Rom. 2:28–29), not bloodline. He types Gentiles/Church grafted into Israel's promises (Eph. 2:12–13), claiming "booty" (Hebron) through wholehearted obedience. His unchanging vigor (Josh. 14:10–11) contrasts wilderness deaths, symbolizing eternal youth in Christ for believers.
- Theological Tie: With Joshua (Ephraim, 13th tribe typing Church), they alone enter the land (Heb. 3:11), embodying persevering faith securing heavenly inheritance—"higher" than Hebron's elevation.

2. City of Refuge: Sanctuary for the Guilty

- Context: One of Levi's six refuge cities (Josh. 20–21), for accidental killers fleeing the avenger of blood. Levites (13th tribe type) scatter among tribes, performing priestly/judicial duties without land inheritance.
- Significance: Types the Church as refuge for all guilty of Christ's crucifixion (Jews/nations unknowingly; Gal. 1:13; Acts 3:17). High Priest (Christ) intercedes now (Heb. 7:25), delaying King's vengeance (Rev. 19). Urges Jews to flee to Church/Hebron before Jerusalem's judgment, not return prematurely.

3. Patriarchal and Davidic Associations: Sojourn and Kingship

- Patriarchs: Abraham buys Machpelah cave in Hebron as sole possession—a burial for Sarah, then Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and wives (Gen. 23; 25:9; 35:27–29). Types believers as earth-strangers (Heb. 11:13), buried in hope, awaiting kingdom revelation.
- David: Anointed king twice at Hebron—first over Judah (7.5 years, 2 Sam. 2:1–4), then all Israel (33 years, 2 Sam. 5:1–5)—before Jerusalem's capital. Types Christ's dual rule: first with Church (Hebron/heaven, outside earthly domain) as Priest-King, then millennial Jerusalem (Zech. 6:12–13; Rev. 21).

4. Samson's Gates: Sovereignty Elevated

- Context: Samson, fearing Philistine betrayal in Gaza, uproots city gates at night and hauls them to Hebron's hills (Judg. 16:1–3). Gates symbolize sovereignty/control.
- Significance: Samson types Christ's earthly ministry; Philistines type world/enemies. Sovereignty stolen from "Gaza" (unconquered Philistine stronghold, eternal "thorn" like Anakites; Josh. 11:22) ascends to Hebron (highest peak). Prefigures Church claiming Christ's authority from enemies, preceding Jerusalem's settlement—resolving modern Hebron/Jerusalem conflicts spiritually first.

Overall Typological Import
Hebron bridges old/new covenants: Caleb's conquest (post-Moses/Aaron deaths, Heb. 9:15–17) echoes Joshua (Jesus) blessing new generation. As "high place" in Judah (Messiah's tribe), it elevates the Church (Caleb/Joshua types) above law/disbelief, securing Abrahamic promises (Gen. 12:3). Sequence—Hebron before Jerusalem—urges settling Church truths now, amid "Gaza" confusions (Roman "Palestina" legacy, Satan's future solace). Believers, like Caleb, claim it by faith, enjoying refuge, kingship preview, and eternal vigour until the King returns. For deeper ties, see Josh. 14–15; 2 Sam. 2–5; Heb. 11.

The land was promised to both Caleb and Joshua and it substantiates their inheritance. Caleb merely wished for the piece of land he spied upon, or had his eyes on. Possibly the place he firmly believed God could clinch the victory. He claimed Hebron as his booty. Moses later guaranteed that he would possess it. Num. 14:24
Deuteronomy 1:36 reiterates that Caleb would possess the land he once walked upon. ‘Except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked because he wholly followed the Lord.’ He rightfully asked for the hill country of Hebron.
‘Now give me that hill country that the Lord promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there, and their cities were large and fortified.’ Jos. 14:12 Hebron is officially the highest town in Israel and the oldest too. It lies 910 metres above sea level. The Anakites or the giants that used to live in Hebron were entrusted to Caleb. Clearly Caleb had privileges exceeding his fellow Israelites who died in the desert. We may ask with Paul who can be called a legitimate Jew? ‘A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly…. . No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly’ Rom. 2:28,29 Our Lord looks at the heart and our lineage does not interest Him. Caleb being a heathen did participate in the promises of Israel. If any heathen did belong to Israel, it is usually via the tribe of Judah, as exemplified by Caleb. Our Lord Jesus was a Jew, and we are one with Him. That equates us with being a Jew. Hebron being the highest town in Israel denotes the eminent position of the Church in heaven. Caleb recaps that he was 40 years old when he spied the land of Canaan, and now he is 85 years old. 14:10 He spied the land after living 2 years in the desert. Since then he spent 38 years in the desert until he crossed the River Jordan. After spying the land, he had to wait 45 years before Hebron was given to him. That meant that Caleb was in the land of Canaan for 7 (45 – 38)

years. The Lord blessed him, and he remained as youthful as when he spied the land of Israel. The disbelieving children of Israel died due to old age, in contrast to Caleb, who remained youthful. Even the shoes he had on his feet did not wear, because he served the Lord wholeheartedly. 14:14 Not aging as he should, he desired to enjoy the land God had promised him. In the following chapter, we read that Caleb drove out the 3 Anakites, the descendants of Anak. 15:14 Joshua blessed him, giving him what was due to him. Until the Book of Joshua was written, God continually blessed Caleb's descendants in the land. Paul says that we were once without God and lived far from the promises of God. Eph. 2:12 Caleb used to be estranged from the household of Israel, comparable to the heathen nations today. Via Joshua he is no stranger. Caleb means a dog or a heathen, and it is tied to the Hebrew word meaning 'to be caged in like a bird', or a prisoner in exile. According to the Bible the word exile means having no part of Israel or Judah. Judging by Caleb's name we may argue that he doesn't deserve to be part of Israel, and yet enjoyed the greatest booty.
All Israel failed and died in the desert except for Joshua and Caleb, who epitomise the Church today. We too can claim our greatest inheritance ever, by following our Lord's footsteps wholeheartedly via our faith in Him. By persevering to serve our Lord, we can claim Hebron, or heaven, which is a great deal higher than the 910 metres of Hebron. The town of Hebron is often mentioned in the Bible.

∗ To begin with we notice that David was made king twice at Hebron. At first he ruled the tribe of Judah for 7½ years. Following that the complete nation of Israel asked him at Hebron to be their king for the following 33 years. It all started at Hebron before Jerusalem became his capital city. Similarly today we understand that prior to the time when Christ's Kingdom will settle in Jerusalem, He will rule at Hebron with the Church. Currently Christ's Kingdom is now in heaven and outside the domain of Jerusalem. We now recognise Christ as both Priest and King, unlike the earth which sneers at His claims.
∗ Hebron is also the dwelling place of Abraham, who lived in the land as a stranger. During Abraham's sojourn on earth, he had no assets in the land to claim as his own, except the piece of land he bought as a burial place. There Sarah was buried, and afterwards Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and some of his wives. Similar to us we now live at Hebron in expectation of His kingdom to be revealed. Ancient writings tell us all the sons of Jacob were buried at Hebron, except for Joseph.
∗ Hebron was also a city of refuge, and that epitomises the Church today. Levi is also a type of the Church being the 13th tribe. If someone accidentally killed his fellow citizen, he would find refuge in such a city. Now the Jews and all the other nations of the world are guilty of crucifying our Lord. Paul says that in his innocence he too was guilty, unaware he persecuted Christ and His Church. 'For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.' Gal. 1:13 That is the position of the Jewish nation today as they crucified our Lord unknowingly. Seeing they are guilty they

need to escape to the cities of refuge, to escape from the avenger of blood. Today the cities of refuge are the Church and God wishes the Jews to seek protection there. Now many Christians wrongly desire the Jews to return to Israel, but that is dangerous as the avenger is still at large in Jerusalem. Soon He will appear with great revenge. At the cities of refuge, the high priest ruled and not the king. Christ is our High Priest today, and He willingly declined His Kingship until His second coming. Our High Priest intercedes for us now and presently we find solace at Hebron.

∗ In the history of Samson Judges 16 we read that he communed with an adulterer within the borders of Gaza. The elders of the city decided to wait until the morning knowing that he had to leave through the city's gates. The Philistines feared Samson as he slaughtered so many of them. He was on their most wanted list. Samson did not wait until the morning but instead in the middle of the night he took the gates with all their beams and hinges, and carried them upwards to the mountains of Hebron. Throughout the Bible, the city gates portray sovereignty, as at that place, one decides who may go in or out of the city. The sovereignty that was locked away in Gaza went to the highest peak at Hebron. Before the kingdom is settled in Jerusalem, it will be at Hebron. Here again, we are dealing with truths pertaining to the Church. The sequence is first Hebron then Jerusalem. Samson is a type of our Lord during His sojourn on earth. The sovereignty the Philistines used to enjoy was taken from them, and it is entrusted to Christ at Hebron. Via the Church His kingdom will eventually settle at Jerusalem. Today the main problems surrounding the state of Israel are Jerusalem and Hebron. They ought to realise that the problems surrounding Hebron need to be settled first, before Jerusalem is clinched via the Church. The land of Canaan was meticulously divided amongst all the tribes of Israel. The first to be allotted land was Caleb, as he received his inheritance even before the tribes of Israel did. Joshua was the last to receive his inheritance. Dividing the land started with Caleb (Judah) and it ended with Joshua (Ephraim) and both these tribes are the largest and the most important of all Israel. Even today these 2 main tribes are known as the 2, and the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Joshua 15 Judah is given a great inheritance towards the south of the country bordering many enemies. Joshua 16 Land is given to Ephraim. Joshua 17 Land is given to Manasseh.

Judah received the first blessing because from that tribe the King would be born at Bethlehem. The next to be blessed were the two sons of Joseph, firstly Ephraim and then his brother Manasseh. Joshua 18 Land is given to Benjamin. Amongst the seven remaining tribes, Benjamin was the first to be blessed, being the full brother of Joseph. The land belonging to Benjamin is wedged between Ephraim and Judah. Later in the history of Israel when the 11 tribes split from Judah or Rehoboam, parts of Benjamin were allotted to Judah.

Previously King David used to rule merely over Judah for 7½ years, before he accepted to be king over all the tribes of Israel. Shortly afterwards Israel was again split when they refused Rehoboam. However when they did split, God ensured that one half of the tribe of Benjamin did accompany Judah. A part of Benjamin then bonded with them for a reason.

They would remain a lamp of the Lord to brighten Judah. 1 Kings 11:36 Jerusalem is wedged between the land of Benjamin and Judah. Judah was incapable of ridding the land of all the Jebusites, Jos. 15:63 and as a result that part of Jerusalem was given to Benjamin. Saul of Tarsus or the apostle Paul is an example of how Benjamin is a lamp of the Lord to edify Judah. The promises that were previously made to Joseph are accessible to the tribe of Judah via Benjamin. Joshua 19 The remaining tribes of Israel were blessed with land except the Levites. This chapter closes when God gave Joshua Timnath-serah, in the mountainous terrain of Ephraim. The Levites lived scattered amongst Israel, and they had both religious and social duties amongst them. They were given cities amongst the tribes, and whether they fulfilled their duties is difficult to ascertain. I believe if the Levites remained faithful to their calling, the history of Israel would have ended more positively. It proved impossible time and again. The Levites had to share the Word of God, warning them not to follow the 'strange gods'. The Levites had 48 cities and 6 of them were known as the cities of refuge.

Joshua 20
The Cities of Refuge

The cities of refuge were previously mentioned by Moses, and moreover they were allocated by him. Throughout the history of Israel in the Old Testament, it is difficult to believe that the cities of refuge ever functioned. Early in the history of Israel in Exodus 21, vv. 12–13 we read of them. Any person who caused an accidental death or a death that was not premeditated could find solace there. 'But if it is an accident and God allows it to happen, I will appoint a place where the slayer can run for safety' Ex. 21:13Great emphasis is placed on those cities as it epitomises the grace bestowed on them by God, even when they deserved to die. We cannot help but notice the common phrases today such as: 'Why did God allow this to happen?' and 'Why doesn't He engage Himself in the wrongdoings of the world?' What God is doing today is not outlined in the Ten Commandments of Moses but rather it is portrayed in the history of the cities of refuge. Those cities of refuge clearly signify that all Israel and every nation are to blame, as they caused the death of our Lord Jesus. We all are guilty and need to die.
Indeed we are, and that is the reason why God did something with our greatest guilt. Peter correctly said they did it innocently. 'And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.' Acts 3:17 They did not realise who the Lord Jesus was and now as a nation they can escape to the cities of refuge or the Church. Today the Jewish nation does need to flee to such a city, and if they refuse they will die. Numbers 35 is the most elaborate chapter with regard to these cities.
Indeed God is concerned about the world and the only remedy is to escape to the cities and to be redeemed by Christ. Refusing that, we and the world will be left helpless. There ought to be 6 cities of refuge v. 6, and they need to be allotted soon after Israel claimed the land of Canaan. v.

10 That is to allow any to seek refuge from the avenger of blood, translated as ga'al in the Hebrew. Str. no. 1350
is a frequent word in the history of the Old Testament. A familiar history is the kinsman in the history of Ruth. Boaz was her kinsman and he was moved to rescue her from her plight. The avenger has the right to do that as he is the head of the family. If he refused, the second in line, e. g. his younger brother, can fulfil the duty.
Pertaining to Christ the avenger of His blood is the resurrected Christ. As the resurrected He is the head of His family. Being the second Adam, he is capable of redeeming us, similar to Boaz redeeming Ruth. He is simultaneously our Redeemer and the avenger to those who reject His invitation of redemption. With His second coming to earth, He will be the avenger of blood and then Psalm 2 will be literally fulfilled.
The person seeking such refuge needs to face a panel of judges, and they are the congregation of the city. Num. 35:12 They will decide if it is culpable homicide. An example of such an accident is with the slipping axe, a falling stone or a wooden implement. Num. 35:16–18 The implements were iron, stone and wood, the ones that caused our Lord's death. Each stroke of an axe can endanger any life, Ecc. 10:9 and therefore our life is daily at risk. I cannot help but reiterate 2 Kings 6 vv. 1–7 where the sons of the prophets said they need extra space, as the dwelling they used to live in was too confined. The small space is the old covenant, and the large space they needed pictures the vastness of the new covenant. It is grace opposing the old covenant. In that history, the rented axe fell in the water, and once he threw a stick in the water, the axe floated above the water to be snatched up again.
The loaned axe is the old covenant and the momentum of the law endangered everyone. The iron that drifted upon the water portrays that the plunge of the old covenant or the axe is absorbed with our Lord's death and resurrection. The wood that is thrown in the water is very similar to the piece of wood that was thrown into the bitter waters of Marah. Ex. 15:25
In that history, the bitter water became sweet again. Our Lord Jesus was once cursed hanging on a tree or the wood, Gal. 3, but the same wood that formed the cross made the waters sweet, and even made the axe float above the waters. The dwelling place of the prophets of Elisha that used to be small and confined got larger to accommodate the vastness of the new covenant. 'if anyone has a stone in his hand that could kill, and he strikes someone so that he dies, he is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death.' Num. 35:17 The 'stone' is a stone of stumbling.
It is a stone that will pulverize the countries of the world. 'And whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.' Matt. 21:44 With those dreadful words, Christ will judge all the nations of the world and justice will be done. Indeed a few years later the Jewish nation did go into exile. Our chief corner stone is Christ, but it is also a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to any who refuse to believe in Him. Peter says the unbelievers are doomed and that they will meet their fate head on. 1 Pet. 2:7,8

They stumble because they disobey the message – falling backwards. Their willingness to be burdened by the law prohibits them from enjoying the freedom of God's grace. Once the avenger of blood returns he will surely put the murderers to death. Num. 35:19 Since Christ's crucifixion, there has been no contact whatsoever between Christ and the Jewish nation.

If that happens, He will surely judge them. Many complain today that our Lord is reserved and quiet, as no one is aware of His presence today. Our Lord is now tolerant and forgiving, but Psalm 2 is clear that once He appears, He will speak in His wrath. Ps. 2:5 He will actively engage Himself with our world, and with His return no stone will be left unturned. The cities will be bulldozed. It was fulfilled in the past, but that was not their final fulfilment. The people of Israel refused the 'Stone' or Christ and similarly the Lord will refuse their stones or the foundations of their city. If any murderer did escape to any of the cities of refuge, the assembly of the cities will decide whether it happened accidentally or not. If accidentally he will need to remain there until the death of the high priest. The murderer is not safe once he leaves the boundaries of the cities or when the high priest dies.

Hebrews 7 v. 14 says clearly that when our Lord died on the cross, He did not die as a priest. 'For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

'He was rejected dying as the King of the Jews. In no way can our Lord's death on the cross be compared to the death of the high priest in the cities of refuge. If we argue, believing that the high priest dying in the city of refuge is Christ, then certainly that is no joyous occasion for us. Our Lord Jesus was born as part of the tribe of Judah, and no mention is made of Him as belonging to the Levites or any priestly order. Now Christ is our High Priest but He received it not as part of the Levite order, no, He received it after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 7:17 Since then our Lord is radiating eternal life; He is enriched and qualified to become our High Priest. He is the High Priest to any who receive Him. Within the scope of the new covenant, the death of our High Priest is unimaginable. When we study the cities of refuge we can argue:

The victim is our Lord dying on the cross;
The guilty party is no person but a nation, or all the nations of the world;
The cities of refuge are no real cities but rather the Church;
The high priest of the old covenant died and it epitomises the law.
The death of the priest is the end of the law.
The time wedge between the death of the high priest and the death of the victim is known as our dispensation of grace.

It's true today that even though we are freed from the tentacles of the law, the law is by and large still esteemed by the Jewish nation. Our complete world is overshadowed by the many laws, and there is no respite. With Christ's second coming to earth, He will make a definite end to the law. That is the death of the 'high priest', the old covenant and everything it entails. Our world is cursed and when the 'avenger' appears

everything will go wrong. The only possible way to escape that judgement is to seek sanctuary in the cities of refuge. Within the boundaries of the cities of refuge, we can find asylum, as it is a safe haven for us.
We find a hint of that in the Books of Moses and especially in the Psalms. In the Psalms, we find the word ‘refuge’ 13 times, as He will shelter us as He once sheltered David. Previously David was anointed as king by Samuel, but he had to flee many times from Saul. In that history, David epitomises the Church and Saul the law.
The word Saul is derived from the root word ‘shaal’ and that means ‘to ask, enquire or borrow’. It is similar to the history of 2 Kings 6 where the ‘borrowed’ axe fell in the water, but miraculously it drifted again above the waters.
The axe in that history conveys the momentum of the law. The axe was borrowed and ‘desired’ by the woodcutters. Saul means ‘the desired’ and he was given to the people by God. ‘Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired’ 1 Sam. 12:13 Similarly, the law was given to Israel. Israel told Moses that they would obey the laws that were given to them.
At first Saul did obey God, and he fulfilled the immediate expectations of the people, but shortly afterwards things went wrong. Similar to the woodcutters the swinging axe released the latent energy of the law. On paper everything seems fine, and there is no error with the law, but once we grip it, disaster will strike.
‘We know that the law is good if one uses it properly’ 1 Tim. 1:8 Our weaknesses are exposed when we handle the law. Sadly the once admired career of Saul’s changed so drastically for the worse. At times, he seemed to become psychotic. David was constantly lurking over his shoulder, and deep inside Saul knew that David would become king. The constant battle between the two epitomises the battle between the old and new covenant. Saul was prompted by his own people. While Saul was on his throne, David had to wait patiently.
Even though David was the anointed king he continually had to flee and seek refuge in the caves. During that time, he wrote most of his Psalms. Today the world rejects Christ’s claims and prefers to live under the yoke of the law. David never wanted to harm Saul and even called him the anointed of God. 1 Sam. 26:10
He realised who Saul was and what he represented. David constantly looked for shelter and hid mainly in the caves as at En-gedi or at Adullam with his followers. He bemoaned that he was always on the run. He and his men clearly portray our present dispensation. ‘All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him.’ 1 Sam. 22:2Ps. 97:7–10 says that our Lord did prepare His throne, and He is patiently awaiting the judgement, but in the meantime we need to wait.
He did not forsake those who seek Him, and He is a refuge to any who anticipate Him. We also have many enemies like David but in the meantime we need to be long-suffering, waiting in the cities of refuge. He will make a definite end to the law or the old covenant. While the law is still esteemed, we need to seek shelter.

Even though the world awaits that final judgement, it is already judged. The judgement is that God has withdrawn Himself from the world. Many will not recognise it as a curse, as they know of nothing better. That is not due to God's slackness, but part of His judgement. When the world rejected Him on the cross, He then hid His face. At present He allows the world to continue via His creating hand, but while they wait for the 'avenger', He will not allow the world to spin out of control. The hole in the ozone layer or the nuclear reactors in Japan do not bother me in the least. My main concern is that the world lives in total darkness, and they are totally oblivious to what is lurking. Rom. 1:21 We are taken to a place of refuge, and we are freed from our confusing world. We can be assured that we are delivered from all God's judgements whether it is present, past or future.
There are verses in the Psalms to encourage us such as: 'You are my hiding place; you preserve me from trouble.' Ps. 32:7 'Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.' Ps. 91:1 'You are my hiding place and my shield.' Ps. 119:114

The Cities Were Accessible
In Joshua 20 v. 9, the cities of refuge are accessible to any Israelite or stranger in the country. The Jews were guilty, and equally so were the other nations of the world. There were 48 cities set aside especially for the Levites, of which 6 were cities of refuge. Thus, the cities of refuge stood in relation to the other cities of the Levites as 6 to 42 (Num. 35:6–7). The priests lived scattered amongst the Israelites. Even before Israel entered the land of Canaan, they were told about the cities of refuge, because they had a prophetic connotation (Ex. 21:12–14). The number 42 concerns death, as pictured in the following instances:

- The Israelites camped in 42 different places en route from Egypt to the land of Canaan. The desert implies death, as there is no water or life, and that is the route Israel had to follow to reach the promised land of Canaan.
- After Elijah disappeared, and the river Jordan 'opened' to allow Elisha to cross it, the children poked fun at him. Following that, 42 children died when the bears attacked them (2 Kin. 2:24). I believe they were adults poking fun.
- For Israel, the great tribulation will also last 42 months. That is the second half of Daniel's 70th week.
- There were 42 generations from Abraham to Christ, because He will lead Israel into the true Canaan (Matt. 1:17).

Once death has taken its course, Christ and the cities of refuge will emerge. After the 42 months or any hardship Israel has experienced, they will enter His rest with great joy. It will coincide with the 'Day of the Lord.' Israel will recognise their Messiah, and even though the other 42 cities of the Levites are tarnished with death, life will reign in the 6 cities of refuge.

The World Today
Now the world (the 42 cities) is eclipsed in darkness, and we are subjected to the evil forces of Satan. We who follow Christ have a 'lamp' that shines

in a dark world. God’s Word (light) is within us, and that will never perish (2 Pet. 1:19; Matt. 24:35). God’s plan for our fallen world is not clearly spelled out in the prophetic Word, but we can notice patterns in it once we study God’s dealings with Israel. An example is the cities of refuge**, which** in a discreet way testify to God’s dealings with our world.
God uses simple pictures**, such as** a grain of wheat, to simplify for the world that, through rebirth, we need to die to become part of the new creation.
We are now one plant in Christ. ‘For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection’ (Rom. 6:5). We have died, and we have risen with Him. We have found our refuge in the risen Christ, and similarly the cities of refuge are a safe haven destined for a lost world. Indirectly, we are all accountable for Christ’s death, yet there is an escape route.
There were three cities of refuge to the east of the river Jordan, and the other three to the west of the river Jordan. It was planned this way so that any Israelite could quickly escape to the nearest city of refuge – where he would be guaranteed to live, protected from the avenger of blood.

The Avenger of Blood

The ‘avenger of blood’ was the chosen one to kill the murderer or suspect, even if it was done accidentally. (Num. 35:12) The cities of refuge were primarily there to protect the guilty party, who had accidentally killed another person. This offence is known as manslaughter today. The avenger was the closest relative of the victim, and he had the right to kill the murderer. An example is when Cain murdered Abel, and Abel’s blood cried out from the ground (Gen. 4:10).
Moses’ laws are inflexible and are grounded on the following ethics: ‘But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot’ (Ex. 21:23–24). In God’s covenant with Noah, it clearly states: ‘Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed’ (Gen. 9:6).
The avenger was the head of the family, and he was duty-bound to take care of the family interests. In Ruth’s story, there was also a redeemer or kinsman (go’el, Strong's no. 1350) that appears 17 times in the Book of Ruth; he had to take care of her. Once the avenger has taken revenge for the victim, another avenger may arise, thus leading to a vicious chain of murders, or even tribal wars.
The high priest in the city of refuge was able to shelter the murderer, only if the murder was proved not to be deliberate. Then he was allowed to remain in the city of refuge. There he was safe from the avenger as long as the high priest lived (Num. 35; Deut. 19; Josh. 20).

The Six Cities of Refuge

Long before Israel reached the land of Canaan, God had promised the cities to Israel. There were 3 on the east of the river Jordan and 3 to the west. ‘You shall give three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities shall you give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge’ (Num. 35:14). God had granted Israel a plan of redemption, or escape for any

who had killed another accidentally. They could flee to the allotted cities to shield themselves from the avenger. However, if the murderer was found guilty of premeditated murder, the city of refuge would not safeguard him, and the avenger of blood would take revenge. The high priest would fend off such a person from entering the city.

The Route to the City of Refuge
The roads leading to the city of refuge had to be visible and free of all obstacles. If there were any, they had to be removed. From Jewish tradition, we believe that there were many signposts to lead fugitives to the cities, chiefly at well-known intersections. The cities were for both the Israelites and the Gentiles. The Gentiles were also entitled to this protection; therefore, the cities were accessible for them too.

Who Governed These Cities?
The cities of refuge were governed by the high priest, and not the king. The high priests were compassionate, and the relevant person had to remain in the city until the death of the high priest (Num. 35:28).

The Significance of the City of Refuge
When our Lord died on the cross, we were all guilty of his death; however, the good news is that any Israelite or Gentile could enjoy the protection within any city of refuge. We need to be aware of the route that will lead us to this city, and we need to obey the Living signposts as found in God's Word. Now the city of refuge is our only safe haven, and there we will find the risen Christ. He is our High Priest, and also our shelter. We find the concept of the cities of refuge many times in the Psalms: 'The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble' (Ps. 9:9). 'You art my hiding place; you shalt preserve me from trouble' (Ps. 32:7). 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble' (Ps. 46:1). 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty' (Ps. 91:1). 'You art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word' (Ps. 119:114). This invitation is open to anyone, to any Jew or Gentile, whether they live in Israel or any other countries of the world. Presently, the nation of Israel is shadowed by the grace of the Avenger of Blood, despite being guilty of the worst transgression ever, namely the Lord Jesus' death outside the gates of Jerusalem. The Book of Ezekiel quotes Jerusalem as the 'bloody city' (22:2; 24:6, 9), because the blood of the 'Son of Man' flowed outside its city gates. Both the Jews and the Roman Empire (under the leadership of Pontius Pilate) were co**-**responsible for His death. The Jews unashamedly accused Him and took Him to Pilate, as the Jewish nation was powerless to impose the death penalty. They both agreed to crucify Him, and since then Herod and Pilate became friends.

Who Is the Avenger of Blood?
We may speculate who it was that our Lord Jesus crucified. It is indeed God, and He is the risen Christ. In the past, a few years after the crucifixion, God took revenge and He used the Romans to drive the Jews

out of His land and from Jerusalem. Jerusalem was guilty of the worst crime, and during the Roman exile**;** Jerusalem was levelled to the ground. Even though the Jews were previously scattered in the Babylonian exile, the Roman exile is by far the greatest, and even today the Jewish nation is restless. ‘Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting-place for the sole of your foot; but there the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul’ (Deut. 28:65). As a nation, they have rejected the offer of the city of refuge, and in the meantime they will find no rest, for the Avenger of Blood is in pursuit.

Is This Murder or Culpable Homicide?
God tells us that the Lord Jesus’ death was committed in ignorance. ‘Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do’ (Luke 23:34). The words our Lord spoke on the cross prove to us that the crucifixion was culpable homicide.

Israel’s Ignorance
After Christ’s resurrection, Peter addressed the Jewish nation with the following words: ‘But he put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. … And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also’ (Acts 3:15–17). Israel killed the Lord Jesus out of envy, and now God allows them a chance to escape to the city of refuge. In Deuteronomy 19 there is an account of the cities of refuge, and it also points to Christ’s death.
In this chapter, someone dies accidentally when the iron head of an axe dislodges from the handle. Now that would be the equivalent of an industrial accident. ‘For instance, a man may go into the forest with his neighbour to cut wood, and as he swings his axe to fell a tree, the head may fly off and hit his neighbour and kill him. That man may flee to one of these cities and save his life’ (Deut. 19:5). The neighbour who is killed suggests the Lord Jesus, who was crucified. The axe reflects the prime latent power of the law. When we swing the axe or use the law, things can go awfully wrong. Israel could not direct the swing of the axe, as they were powerless to keep the laws of Moses.
This suggests that any person who subjects themselves to Moses’ laws will succumb to their fate. They will never master them. When they crucified the Lord Jesus, they didn’t know He was their neighbour. Peter said that they, as well as their rulers, did that in ignorance. For that very reason, we are called to go to the cities of refuge. They did kill the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:36; 3:15), but their innocence needed to be proved at the city of refuge. If anyone believes in Christ, he has a sure refuge, for He is our High Priest and He lives forever! Strangely, the ‘neighbour’ in the story of the Good Samaritan is Christ. The original question was:
How can I inherit eternal life, and who is this ‘neighbour’? (Luke 10:25–36) – the one that I may love to inherit eternal life. Without a doubt, the neighbour is Christ, as He helped the wounded man who was sure to die. Even more, he gave him shelter and money. We were lost and sure to die,

and only through His grace do we inherit eternal life. This parable has many questions, but if we fail to see Christ we will never gain a true perspective of the parable. Now the Jewish nation is known for their enthusiasm. They are a zealous nation. Paul referred to them: ‘For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge’ (Rom. 10:2). Obviously, Paul was no exception: ‘Concerning zeal, persecuting the Church’ (Phil. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:13). That enthusiasm hinders them from accepting Christ.

The Signpost

The question today is: How can Israel escape the Avenger of Blood, and how do we follow the road signs? Peter made it clear with his message on the day of Pentecost, the day when the Jews asked him what to do now (Acts 2:36–39). At that moment, some of the Jews realised that they had crucified the Lord Jesus in ignorance, and then the scales that caused their blindness fell from their eyes. The other Apostles, as well as Paul, gave them a similar message, and it was Paul’s greatest desire to save the Jewish people. Throughout his missionary journeys, his initial response was to preach the Gospel, firstly to his own people and then to the Gentiles. He was never ashamed of it (Rom. 1:16).

The Church

Today, the city of refuge for both the Jews and Gentiles is the Church, for we are all guilty of our Lord’s death. Christ is the door of the Church, and He is the living signpost. ‘I am the door’ (John 10:9; 14:6) refers to Christ, and if we ignore this city of refuge we will certainly succumb to the avenger. ‘How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?’ (Heb. 2:3). Israel was the formerly chosen nation and was called from amongst the Gentile nations to bear witness to God. They were supposed to teach the Gentiles the truth, but instead the duties have been reversed. The Gospel reaches the Jews today via the preaching of the Gentiles. ‘In the Law it is written: Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord’ (1 Cor. 14:21). This verse refers to the prophecy of Isaiah 28:11. Now the orthodox Jews are only interested in the original Old Hebrew language, and any other language is considered ‘strange lips’. The New Testament is written in Greek, and it is regarded as improper by the orthodox Jew. Nevertheless, today ‘the other tongues’ will direct the Jews to the city of refuge, but most of them (Jews and Gentiles) discount the message. Only a very small band of believers actually makes it to the city of refuge! Those cities reflect the Church where we find shelter. Before Israel arrived in the land of Canaan, Moses mentioned the three cities of refuge to the east of the river Jordan (Deut. 4:41). Those three cities especially reflect the Church today, because Israel was still en route to the promised land of Canaan, like us today. It suggests the hidden Kingdom of Christ ‘outside Jerusalem’, being east of the river Jordan. Later, Israel had to prepare another three cities of refuge inside the land of Israel. They in turn reflect the Millennium, when His Kingdom is revealed.

Israel Has Returned to the Place of Crime
The Jews are back in the land of Israel; however, they did not return with a repentant heart, but with scepticism. God has promised them the land, but they returned ahead of time. According to the laws of Moses, the guilty person was not allowed to leave the city of refuge until the high priest had died (Josh. 20:6). Today, Israel's circumstances are tricky, as they are unaware that the High Priest lives forever and will never die. Now Israel will not find any solace in Jerusalem but only in the cities of refuge outside Israel. Many Christians today consider the Zionist movement to be the answer to their prayer, but in the light of the Scriptures, it is totally out of tune to think the situation will benefit them. The Jews defend themselves by trying to create Israel, in anticipation of entering the promised rest. It is pointless, and their future looks bleak**,** and they need the city of refuge. Any possible peace negotiations they try to secure with the surrounding Arab nations will falter. True peace can only ensue once the Prince of Peace is on earth. Presently, Mount Moriah belongs to the heathen nations, and once Christ returns, there will be a true temple on the same Mount Moriah.

Joshua 21

This chapter allocates 42 more towns to the Levites. They were scattered throughout Israel. In total, there were 48 if we add the cities of refuge.

Joshua 22

The 2½ tribes that were promised the land east of the River Jordan were permitted to leave to claim their own heritage. As previously mentioned, they were the warriors. According to the history of Caleb, the war in Israel lasted for at least 7 years.

Joshua 23

Israel's annoying enemies
This chapter commences with the words, 'After many days.' I am not sure how many years passed until Joshua became very old. When Joshua entered the land, he was relatively young and started to become old once he had conquered the land of Canaan. It was probably less than 20 years. Strangely, Joshua mentioned no successor to guide Israel after his death. Moses mentioned Joshua as his follower, but unlike the early history, Joshua had none. After the history of Joshua, we enter the time of the Judges, and then many things went awfully wrong. Israel erred continually, and at times a Judge appeared who steered them back to God. That happened frequently when they conquered their annoying enemies. Once that Judge died, things proved to be even worse.
'And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God promised concerning you; all have come to pass for you, not one of them has failed.' (Jos. 23:14)

This verse reiterates that all the promises God made to Israel were truthful, and He maintained His promises. They had no excuse not to trust in Him. Since they set foot in the Promised Land until Joshua's death, they personally experienced the steadfastness of God's Word, and they had no reason to doubt Him. Not a single word of God has failed them, and that is true whether it has a negative or a positive connotation. They personally experienced the 'good', but God did warn them via Moses that the curses would follow once they were unfaithful to His Word. That is clearly emphasised in the last chapters of the Book of Deuteronomy. Chapter 28 ends with Israel being led away into captivity:

'And the Lord will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, "You shall never see it again. " And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.' (Deut. 28:68)

It was a sad event when the Jews were led back to Egypt, their country of birth. That was roughly in the year 70 AD, since they rejected Christ. It was well narrated by the famous Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, who lived during that period. The people went in ships to Egypt and sold themselves as slaves until the market was totally saturated. It ended with no one willing to buy them. The circle completed itself. Israel, who was born in Egypt whilst in slavery, ended in the same appalling circumstances. Peter reiterates the sad moment with these hurtful words:

'They make these proverbs come true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and "a washed pig returns to the mud. "' (2 Pet. 2:22)

Following Deuteronomy 28, we need to study chapter 30, as they flow into each other. Deuteronomy 29 is an interlude speaking of the 'secret things' of our dispensation. Deuteronomy 30 commences with the words:

'When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart, wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations.' (Deut. 30:1)

During the time of the great tribulation, when Israel experiences great distress, then they will grasp their disposition, weighing up all their blessings and curses over the past 4,000 years. Then they will return to Israel under the umbrella of Christ. The words 'to take them to heart' mean Israel accepting Christ in faith. That is true, as Paul also stresses the above verses in Romans 10:8–10, saying that by 'taking to heart' is to believe. The blessings and curses will follow Israel when they are dispersed amongst the nations on earth. Whilst being scattered like sheep without a shepherd, they will receive Christ.

'And they shall return unto the Lord thy God, and shall obey his voice according to all that I command thee that day.' (Deut. 30:2)

Christ will yet again allow them to return to the Promised Land, as promised by their ancestors (Deut. 30:5). Many believe differently, arguing that the above prophecies were fulfilled once Israel repented in the Babylonian exile. Whilst in exile, they wrote the Talmud and returned with Ezra to claim Jerusalem once more. They believe that Israel's repentance at Babylon ended their unbelief and that the above prophetic words have no import for the 'future'.

It is difficult for them to argue that the Babylonian exile also involves Egypt and the rest of the world. The Jews today call the exile ‘the bitter Edomite exile’. That is true because, once Israel comes to repentance, it will be at Petra, which is nestled in the mountains of Edom.

People generally believe, when reading Joshua 23, that Joshua cautioned them earnestly ‘to do’ the laws of Moses. I believe that is a matter of their heart, and whether the people of Israel believe in God’s Word. It is not a matter of their hands and feet, but rather the attitude of their hearts that matters (Deut. 6:6). Objectively, our world sees Christians as a group of people obsessed with the laws or the commandments of Moses, with all its do’s and don’ts. Shortly afterwards, we are made out to be living as hypocrites, doing very things we teach as wrong.

After many days, or before the death of Joshua, the people realised that the Lord had been faithful to all His promises. Joshua then called together all the elders, leaders, judges and officers, as they were called, to make all the decisions for Israel. Furthermore, they had to be an example to all the people of Israel. That is not democratic according to our own standards, as the ‘people’ want to rule the land. According to the Bible, if we do follow the flow of the multitude, then we will always be in the wrong.

‘Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong.’ (Exod. 23:2)

Within the confines of Israel, the leaders used to make the decisions and not the people. That continued during the time of the prophets, and Micah, who was one of the prophets. He warned them that the leaders of Israel deprived the people for their own gain (Mic. 3). They were answerable for the wrong in the country. Similarly, God judged the Jews according to the decisions that were made by the Sanhedrin, who, as the leaders of Israel, refused the resurrected Christ. I firmly believe that in the near future, after the rapture, the leaders of Israel will accept Christ, and then the blessings will follow.

Joshua spoke to all Israel, and their leaders knew he would die soon. The leaders would need to take the reins, and it would not be the responsibility of one person. That is a superb example of the Church, as we come together via the ‘One’, or Christ, and since the beginning of the Church, there is no appointed leader on earth. To elect a ‘head of the Church’ is wrong. Paul cautioned the leaders in the Church to remain humble and to continue living as part of the flock. During the time of the Judges, things went awfully wrong, but then a Judge appeared, like Gideon, to conquer their enemy. Similarly, during the past 2,000 years, the history of the Church has gone askew, but then, thankfully, people like Charles Spurgeon have appeared to steer them back to God’s Word.

Joshua gathered the leaders at Shiloh, at the place where the tabernacle of God was standing (Jos. 18:1). During that time, there was no other capital in Israel, and the tabernacle was the central hub of activity until the time of Samuel. During a notable time in Israel’s history, when Samuel lived, the ark was captured by the Philistines, and then the two sons of Eli died. The ark was taken from Shiloh to reside amongst the Philistines. Similarly, today the ark is amongst the heathen nations, or the Gentiles, who have accepted Christ.

The first time we read of Shiloh is in the Book of Genesis:

‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.’ (Gen. 49:10)

During that remarkable history, Shiloh could only have been the last King of Judah. The new Bible translators ignore the word Shiloh, as they fail to spot its real meaning. The word Shiloh relates to the fulfilment of prophecy, and it is tied with our Lord’s first coming to earth and not His second coming. Here, Christ is seen under the pseudonym of Shiloh. The name means ‘to be at rest’ or ‘at peace’. The King has come from Judea, and He is our rightful King. We can enjoy the peace and the rest or respite at Shiloh.

‘You have seen all that the Lord your God has done.’ (Jos. 23:3a)

The Lord did mighty things for Joshua, and similarly He has done the same for us. We don’t need to battle or to be in a skirmish, as we can relish our victory in Christ. It is an embarrassing idea to think we need to clash with the outside world to stamp our authority. They will merely ridicule us. It is true that we are absorbed in a battle, but all we need to do is to remain standing in the promises made to us. Paul says we merely need to stand in the freedom that Christ has attained for us:

‘Stand firm therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free.’ (Gal. 5:1)

‘The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is His name.’ (Exod. 15:3)

‘For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was Your right hand, Your arm.’ (Ps. 44:3)

It is our responsibility to stand firm in the freedom, and if we provoke an attack, it will merely unsettle us. That is true today, as during the time of Moses or King David. When Paul says: ‘Giving no offence in anything’ (2 Cor. 6:3), it is not to offend our neighbour but rather to avoid offending God. If He is content with our daily walk, we don’t need to fret, even though everything around us seems to go wrong.

Joshua reassured the people that their skirmish with their enemies was not dependent on their own skills in doing battle, but it was solely dependent on Christ’s work for us.

‘For the Lord your God is He who has been fighting for you.’ (Jos. 23:3b)

Israel needs to grasp that whenever in the past they did steer away from God, He did not fight their cause. If it happened, they needed to learn the consequences. It proved they were not skilled enough to battle with their enemy. Similarly, today things will go wrong if we forfeit our position in Christ. Each blessing we possess today is due to His grace, and once we fail the principles of grace, then we will be caught under the umbrella of the law. It will frustrate many, making us easy prey for the evil forces, thus losing our inheritance. Our Lord illustrated our individual relationship with Him via the well-known parable of the vine. It is a simple truth, saying that those who remain in Him will yield much fruit (John 15:4–5).

Despite many of Israel’s conquests, the enemy still lingered in the land of Canaan. Joshua reminded Israel of them, as many enemies were scattered amongst them. Joshua reiterated that the gods of their enemies needed to be loathed, and they were placed there for a reason: to test Israel’s faith in Him. If they obeyed the other gods, then calamity would strike.

‘Behold, I have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that remain, along with all the nations that I have already cut off.’ (Jos. 23:4)
‘Know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you.’ (Jos. 23:13)
The strangers who subjected themselves to God, like the Gibeonites, are totally part of Israel, but those enemies who refuse to adhere to the God of Israel will be a thorn in their flesh. Today, we have a very similar problem with the different religions that sweep our countries that used to be open to the Gospel of Christ. The culture that used to be associated with our religion is slowly crumbling. Christ is not racially prejudiced, as we are bonded together with many Gentiles scattered throughout the world.
Due to the central location of the land of Canaan in the world, there will always be travellers crossing the continent. Joshua repeatedly warned Israel not to associate themselves with the other people still remaining in the land, and not to even mention the names of their gods (Jos. 23:7). Joshua is adamant that they are not allowed to marry the ‘other people’ (Jos. 23:12). It is not the person as such, but rather their religion. Our Western culture has adopted many laws of the Bible, and many are familiar with the seven fruits of the Spirit and desire freedom for all its citizens.
If Israel allows themselves to be intermingled with the neighbouring countries or their gods, they will forfeit their rights to continue to live peacefully in their country. Throughout the history of Israel, they never sustained their yearly obligations like the Passover, except on a few occasions, but then again it crumbled within one generation. Israel never adhered to them, and we have many examples, such as in Leviticus 25. Then Moses told the people to rest the land every 7th year, known as the Sabbath year. Likewise, every 50th year they had to celebrate the year of Jubilee, giving each the freedom to return to the land they previously possessed. That never happened. During the time of Josiah (2 Kings 22), he accidentally discovered the book of the law that had been hidden for many years. The king did rend his clothes, and then they did observe the Passover. However, one verse did strike me:
‘For no such Passover had been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, or during all the days of the kings of Israel or of the kings of Judah.’ (2 Kings 23:22)
Clearly, they never set their mind to observe their feast. Israel was religious but worshipped the gods of their neighbours. Now we find many religions, and the most threatening to the Western world is the Islamic world, which has its origins in Abraham. After the rapture, the pendulum will swing away from Christianity. The Book of Joshua flows into the Book of Judges. The first verse of the Book of Judges mentions the enemies in their land, and they existed to test Israel. God even gives the reason why He did that:
‘Those are the nations the Lord left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan. He did that only to teach warfare

to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience.' (Judg. 3:1–2)

Soon afterwards, the people in Israel will have no first-hand experience of the miracles God did for them, when He led them out of Egypt or when they conquered the land of Canaan. Soon after Joshua's death, they will have a post-war generation. Every Israelite needs to have a personal relationship with God and needs to be familiar with whatever God can achieve in their lives. It is not a theory or the writings of men, but rather their own experiences. That is the reason why God left the enemy in the land to test their faith. Today, our children can be familiar with many Bible stories like David and Goliath, but it does not make them warriors. They will learn of them at a tender age, but they will never experience it first-hand. The Israelites were expected to teach their children why the stones are placed at Gilgal, and that is similar to the significance of our monuments. It should not be from hearsay, but they needed to experience it. Today, we are taught that Satan is conquered, and yet he is allowed to tempt us and to walk around as a roaring lion. It seems rude, but he is given the 'space' to tempt and try us, as a means to know our God. Via all our tribulations and upsets, we can experience His hand. Our conviction is not our knowledge per se, but we attain it via our personal life experiences. We need to be familiar with His ever-guiding hand with all our many tribulations. Paul mentions that:

'And that is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight.' (Phil. 1:9)

We have the knowledge, but we gain our 'depth of insight' via our tribulations. We need to be familiar with how Satan works and how he is conquered today. Satan is already conquered, so why do we get tempted and need to deal with him daily? The reason is to mature us and to enable us to reflect our Lord's own life on earth, and how He triumphed over Satan. Throughout His life on earth, He always remained faithful to God's Word, and what is the use of our faith if it is not tested daily? For that reason, we have our many hindrances. It is not to annoy us but rather to strengthen our faith in Him.

'The enemies remained to test the Israelites, to know if they will obey the Lord's commands, which was given to their forefathers through Moses.' (Judg. 3:4)

From God's perspective, the 'nations' are for our training, and they will always be a burden to Israel and equally to us. It is not only we who bear the brunt of all the sufferings, but also the world. It would have been nice if there were no thorns, and Adam was created in a perfect world. Similarly, Israel would have loved a Promised Land with no enemies in sight.

Presently, the world curses God, and whenever we do hear His Name being mentioned, it is usually accompanied by swearing. They hold Him responsible for all the injustices in our world. God allows that, and at the end of the day we all need to agree that Satan is trying us, and he is trying to test our faith. If we don't succumb to him, we will be blessed. Our faith will be tested, and if we remain standing, then we have a great reward. Whenever our faith is tested, it needs to strengthen us. If we are

troubled like the world, we will gain nothing. Seeing it from a different perspective, we do agree that God uses His adversary for His own purposes. Paul reiterates that no persecution can separate us from the love we have in Christ (Rom. 8:35–39). In the same chapter, we read that: ‘And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.’ (Rom. 8:28)
This implicates that our enemy or Satan will be used for our ‘good’, as we will bear much fruit through all our tribulations. That is our training, and via all our tribulations God will always allow us some freedom. He will never allow us to be tempted more than we can withstand, to ensure that we will not fall. Whatever the circumstances on earth, Israel, as well as ourselves, needs to remain faithful to His Word. If not, things will go awfully wrong, as portrayed throughout the long history of Israel or our world.

Joshua 24

Typological Significance of Joshua's Final Message to Israel

Element	**Biblical Symbol**	**Typological Link to Church Age**
Assembly at Shechem	Covenant site (patriarchal promises; Gen. 12:6)	Grace's renewal over law's Sinai; Church as "spiritual Israel" (Gal. 6:16; Rom. 9:6–8).
Hornets & Victories	God's pre-emptive aid (v. 12; Exod. 23:28)	Spirit's conquest of principalities (Eph. 6:12; 1 John 4:4); missions without human toil.
Stone Witness	Altar/testimony (v. 26–27; Deut. 27:2–8)	Believer's heart-stone (Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 3:3); unalterable vows in trials.
Joshua's House	Exclusive service (v. 15)	Household of faith (Gal. 6:10); family discipleship countering secular drift.

REVIEW
This is the last chapter, and we will find that history constantly repeats itself, as on this occasion. The people gathered themselves together as previously with Moses, reflecting on their past and how to embrace the future. They had no reason to doubt God and, as previously with Moses, Joshua asked Israel whether they would remain faithful to Him. He relived the past history of Israel from father Abraham until his death, reasoning that they had no reason to doubt that God had always remained faithful to His words.
Any leader or politician had to introduce themselves to the people, and they had to decide whether he was suitable for the task or not. Similarly, here Joshua pleaded with Israel to acknowledge God as He is ever faithful. He never enforced Himself on any person. Israel experienced God’s guiding hand, and on that day the people had to choose.
‘And if it seems evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve.’ v. 15Similarly as during Moses’ time, the people of Israel were asked more than once if they wanted to obey God. They were continually probed with the same question throughout the history of the

Old Testament and similarly in the New Testament. Many believed that such a gathering of people happened at least once a year and especially on the great Day of Atonement. On that day, they had to promise their allegiance to God. On the Great Day of Atonement the people as a whole were atoned for their sins, proving their conformity to God's laws. The Lord did speak to His people from the cherubim on the mercy seat of the ark. Sadly, that was practised only a few times in Israel's history. Now we have the means to enter and approach the throne of God. We do not see our Lord as the humiliated One on the cross but rather as the exalted Christ on His throne.
The first gathering of Israel as a nation was with Moses at Mount Sinai. He gave them the law and the Lord spoke unto Moses saying,
'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians.' Ex. 19:4The same words are spoken by Joshua: 'and your eyes have seen what I did in Egypt.' v. 7Moses, who communed with God, did hear His Words and as a messenger he reasoned with the people. In reply the people agreed to adhere to them and answered Moses wholeheartedly:
'All that the LORD has spoken we will do. '
Moses in response detailed God and their commitment to Him. Ex. 19:8 We realise that soon afterwards Israel did err as they were inept to 'do' what God required.
In Deuteronomy 29, we have a very similar setting at the end of Moses' life. He glances anew at the complete history of Israel and also their future. As the history of Israel unfolded, God did sustain all His promises and consequently they could rely on His truthfulness. God repeatedly prompted them to be faithful to Him. They had no reason to doubt as clearly articulated by Joshua.
'You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.' Jos. 23:14
Many times the people of Israel gathered together sometimes with joy or in great distress. I will name a few examples in the Bible.
It happened when:

David was crowned as their king over all the tribes of Israel, or when King Solomon inaugurated the temple.
All the tribes did gather for the last time when the 10 tribes split from the 2 tribes due to the discord between Jeroboam and Rehoboam.
During the time of Ezra when they rebuilt the temple. Then all the people (the 2 tribes) gathered themselves together as one man, as noted in Nehemiah 8:1. Ezra urged the people from a wooden podium to rekindle their relationship with God. They did obey God's Word to repent, but soon afterwards they failed Him as throughout Moses' history.
During the time of the New Testament the Jews were confronted with a similar question: if they would accept the God of Israel who delivered them from Egypt. They could receive the 'One' who was

sent by God. We have long chapters highlighting the discord between God and the Jewish people.
On the day of Pentecost the Jewish nation was gathered, and they listened to Peter, who also quoted the Old Testament.
Acts 7 is a long chapter and then Stephen recalls the history of Israel before being martyred. He addressed the high priest of the Jewish council who were responsible for his death. This chapter is very similar to Joshua 24. Here Stephen addressed the Jews with the same words as Joshua:
‘Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran.’ Acts 7:2‘Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshipped other gods.’ Jos. 24:2
At the end of Stephen’s message, he says that the Lord has made all these things happen. Acts 7:50 He continued saying that the Jewish nation resisted the Holy Spirit as their previous forefathers had. They received the law and the Word of God via Moses and all the other prophets, but they never obeyed them. 7:53
They promised obedience, but they were disloyal. We know what happened to Stephen as the people under the eye of the high priest took stones not to build a monument as they did at the time when they crossed the River Jordan at Gilgal. No, they took them to stone Stephen. Israel did not learn anything from their past history and they continually erred from God. 1 Thess. 2:15
Even though the history of Israel ended lamentably, God did however fulfil His purpose. The people of Israel were previously called from amongst the nations to glorify God and they were blessed, but they also had the risk if they erred, and if they did, God would curse them. They would succumb to His anger as a vessel of God’s wrath. Presently His people are scorned upon and live in exile, but once they repent with Christ’s return, they will have a great positive impact on our world. Stephen encouraged the Jewish people to turn to the living God recalling their past, but as expected, they refused.
In Acts 13 Paul addressed the Jewish council reconsidering the history of the Jewish nation warning them to make the right decision. In this chapter the Apostle Paul confronted them with the risen Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Paul insisted that if they refused Him, the nation would be judged as forewarned by the many prophets. Yet despite all the hindrances, He did something wondrous:
‘Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you.’ Acts 13:41When Israel shunned the Gospel of Christ, it paved the way for the Gentile nations to be blessed with eternal life.
‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.’ Acts 13:46

Paul and Stephen merely reiterated the words of Joshua that Israel is inept to follow God even if they tried their best.

Joshua on hearing their promises told them they would nonetheless fail God, and by swearing allegiance to the God of Israel, would impose a great risk.

‘But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. ”’ Jos. 24:19That is the downfall of the human race for whenever we try our best, we will not succeed. That will dampen the initiative of any persons as they do recognise their shortcomings. Daily we are familiar with the words, ‘if only!

’Many people today believe that ‘if’ Israel obeyed God, things would have turned out differently for them. I believe that was beyond Israel’s grasp as our human nature is at default. Israel, who did commune with God, had the greatest assortment of miseries when compared to all the other nations of the world. Our sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never obeyed or can comply with God's laws, and it never will. Rom. 8:7There always remained a possibility for Israel to refuse the laws of Moses at Mount Sinai. It is possible that a group of Israelites did splinter themselves from the Israelites, and never entered the Promised Land. In the history of our Bible, we find no proof per se, but I believe that a few Israelites did get north over the mountains and then headed west. They were not blessed as they refused to live in the Promised Land with the burden of the law, but on the other hand they did not lose much. Speaking amongst ourselves, who wishes to reject freedom to place themselves under a law? Peter made clear the law is unworkable.

‘Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?’ Acts 15:10The law highlights our frail constitution and if we wish to serve our Lord today, it can only be as part of the dispensation of His grace. During the Old Testament times, we may think the law was to unite the people of Israel, and to draw them closer to God, but it didn’t. In fact, the law exposed their weaknesses. I am very pleased the law was not given to all the nations of the world or to Adam and Eve, to encumber our human race continually. The law was only given to Israel while they lived in the land of Canaan, and that was 2500 years after Adam. Israel was keen at first, but they only adhered to them on short occasions.

With our Lord’s resurrection, He made an end to the law. Rom. 10:4I believe that, in the past, a great number of Israelites refused the laws of Moses and they went to Europe. In the Bible, there is no proof as such. They were the initial Europeans and were known as the Iberians, a pocket of people who resisted the Roman Empire, very much like Asterix’s village. The word Iberia and the word Hebrew are related. Iberia is known as the Hebrew people living in Spain or Portugal.

Joshua told Israel they were inept to worship God, not because He is not merciful, but as it was impossible for them to adhere to the laws of Moses. God made it clear that if they wanted to continue living in His land, they needed to abide by His laws, but soon they would understand that that is unattainable. Moses spoke similar words to the Israelites as he realised

that many curses did overshadow Israel. Deut. 28 Israel had a better future outside Jerusalem or in Babylon during their time of exile. God told them to seek peace in that country, and He even encouraged them to build houses there. Jer. 29:5-7 The law is only for the people if they do live in the Promised Land, but once outside they are as free as all the other nations of the world. God was merciful to allow His people to leave the land in exile, as the 10 lost tribes who never returned back to the Land. They were freed from Rehoboam who tried to trick them into slavery. While, in the Assyrian exile, they did not return to Israel but settled in Europe and possibly joined the Iberians, to later invade complete Europe.
Joshua assembled the people at Shechem and not at Shiloh as in the previous chapter. For that occasion, the complete tabernacle or the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Shechem. I believe that if the tabernacle was broken down and assembled more than 40 times in the wilderness, not much of the tabernacle was left, and it was possibly discarded. Since the time of Joshua only the Ark is mentioned and not the tabernacle. We don't know the exact location of Shechem, but it is nestled in the same valley as Shiloh, but they are about 10 miles apart. Shechem was the first town named in the Promised Land. Gen. 12 It is the first place Abraham visited in Canaan and where Jacob rested after he was reconciled with Esau.
Shechem is a symbol of hope and where everything materialises. When Abraham visited Shechem, there was a renowned oak tree. In itself, the oak tree portrays circumcision when we study the shape of the acorn. It illustrates how God will get rid of the 'old' to create a new. In the Celtic social system, the druid was a title given to learned men and women possessing the 'knowledge of the oak.' The word druid and oak is one and the same. Presently in the land of Canaan the Jews have the fig tree symbolising the law, but the 10 lost tribes are allied with the promises of the oak.
The oak is named by Joshua when he took a large stone and placed it beneath its branches.
'And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.' Jos. 24:26Via Shechem the truth concerning our time is illuminated in many different ways.
Beneath the big oak tree at Shechem stood the sanctuary of the Lord or the Ark of the Covenant.
At that spot, Abraham and Jacob used to live,
and that is where Jacob buried the 'gods' hidden by Rachel when he left Laban. Gen. 35:4
At that place Abimelech claimed himself as king over Israel as he was well aware of the importance of the oak tree. Then it was not an opportune time for Israel.
Much later in history, the Samaritan woman met our Lord at that place. It was then known as Sychar John 4:5 but it is also where Jacob had a well. She as the people of Shechem did recognise our Lord and hailed Him as their King portraying our dispensation. The Jews did ridicule His claims, unlike the Samaritans'.

‘Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshipped other gods.’ v. 2Joshua reiterates the history of Israel and he reminded them that they came from the other side of the Euphrates River serving other gods. The word ‘beyond’ comes from the Hebrew word ‘heber’ meaning Hebrew. They were the chosen people called from beyond the river.
In that verse, Nahor is mentioned and not Haran the other brother of Abraham. The reason is that Nahor’s daughter and granddaughters (Rebecca, Rachel and Leah) were either the wives of Isaac or Jacob. Israel has its roots from both Abraham and Nahor.
‘God sent hornets ahead of Israel to drive out the two kings of the Amorites. It was not their swords or bows that brought them victory.’ v. 12It is difficult to ascertain whether they were real hornets or not. Some believe the hornets portray the bewilderment their enemies had, making them flee or fight each other. The word hornet occurs 3 times in the Old Testament and Exodus 23:27-28 it says that God will rid their enemies in the land of Canaan with fear and with hornets.
When we trace Israel’s history, it is not always true as with the conquest of Jericho and Ai. The two kings of the Amorites were driven away by the hand of God and how exactly I am not sure. Arguably that could also have been due to the hornets. Many a time in Israel’s history their enemies simply vanished without any battle being fought. Once during the time of Gideon he caused them to go into panic merely by 300 men blowing their trumpets and breaking their pitchers. During the time of Elisha the entire army of Syria was baffled 2 Kings 7:5 and disappeared altogether. Their tents and belongings remained, but they were gone due to the ‘hornets’?
‘I have given you a land for which you did not labour, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.’ v. 13The Lord gave them everything to enjoy and Joshua begged them to get rid of all the other gods they had. Joshua told them that today they needed to choose between the gods on the other side of the River Euphrates or the God of Israel. Joshua opted for the Lord and Israel agreed to serve the Lord. v. 18 Joshua did warn them but time and again they agreed to adhere to the God of Israel. v. 21Then Joshua made a covenant with the people, black on white and in writing. Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. 24:26To many, the origin of the Bible can be summed up as a Book with no credibility or connection to the original texts. Theology is wrapped with the idea that the writers copied each other believing that there are many sources of origin.
I firmly believe that since Adam, the Bible was written, and it is totally inspired by God. It was written by men, and it was saved in an archive. At times, people forgot where the archive was as during the time of the kings, yet they did find them again. Adam was the first writer. The word ‘the history or the generations’ in the Book of Genesis stems from the Hebrew word ‘toldah.’ Str. no. 8435
When Adam finished with his writing he signed them with the words: ‘This is the book of the generations of Adam.’ Gen. 5:1

The Book of Genesis has many writers and the first is God; Gen. 2:4 Adam; 5:1 Noah; 6:9 the three sons of Noah; 10:1 Shem; 11:10 Terah; 11:27 Ishmael; 25:12 Isaac; 25:19 Esau; 36:1,9 Jacob; 37:2 and Joseph. 50:25As the firstborn God endowed them with the responsibility to record them, and they were even signed by them. They are the words in the Book of the law. Moses archived them safely and with the exodus of Israel from Egypt they took all their belongings including the archives. God told them nothing of their belongings had to remain in Egypt. Moses had a special archive for the book of the law, and besides in the Ark of the Covenant were the 10 commandments or the 2 tablets of stone. Moses wrote four books including the Book of Deuteronomy that was written shortly before his death. They were all placed beside the Ark.

In the last chapter of Joshua, Joshua continued to write in the Book of the Law as it then existed. The archives of writings were then placed beneath the oak tree and beside the Ark. At that time, the Book of Joshua was also possibly written, except for the last chapter as he was not able to detail his own death. I am sure an editor finished his writings.

Joshua said to all the people, ‘Behold that stone shall be for a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord which He spoke to us; thus it shall be for a witness against you.’ v. 27The large stone heard all the words of Israel, and they are a witness against them. To hear is to receive the words of God, and they are engraved in the stone. Moses also spoke of the book of the law.

Take that Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you. Deut. 31:26Unmistakably the Book of the Law was beside the Ark of the Covenant as during Joshua’s time. They are not the tablets of stone within the Ark, but the archives lying beside them.

During the time of our Lord, there was a large and famous library beside the temple of God. They harboured all the archives of men. We can be astounded with the knowledge of Flavius Josephus, who lived during the time of our Lord. His wealth of information came from that library. The temple and the library were later destroyed by fire when the Jewish nation was sent into exile.

Joshua wrote in that Book of the Law, and obviously that was not a ‘one off’ incidence as Samuel also referred to that book. When all the people of Israel were gathered together as one to crown Saul as king, Samuel says: ‘Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord.’ 1 Sam. 10:25He placed his book at the side of the Ark before the presence of our Lord.

Joshua 24:29-33

Final Typological Summary of the Book of Joshua

Key Site/Event	Biblical Symbol	Church Typology
Jericho	Walled fall by faith/shofars (6)	Walls of hostility crumble (Eph. 2:14); Spirit's triumph (1 Cor. 14:8 —"trumpet").

Ai	Initial defeat, then altar-victory (7–8)	Sin's Achan-leaven purged (1 Cor. 5:6–8); law's curse reversed (Deut. 27–28; Gal. 3:13).
Gibeon	Deceptive alliance (9)	Gentiles' bold faith merges remnant (Rom. 11:11; old wineskins to new, Matt. 9:17).
Hebron	Caleb's giant-conquest (14–15)	Edomite "outsider" inherits via heart-Judah (Rom. 2:28–29); refuge/Church elevation (Ps. 91:1).
Sun Stands Still (10:12–14)	Time halted at Gibeon/Ajalon	Prophetic pause (Dan. 9:27); Church's heavenly battle (Eph. 6:12).
Shechem	Covenant choice/burials (24)	Living water for Samaritans/10 tribes (John 4:42; Acts 1:8—Gospel to "ends").

REVIEW

The following verses can easily be traced in the Book of Judges as they are repeated in that Book. An example is the next verse.

‘The people served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.’ Joshua 24:31 & Judges 2:7To some theologians, this is the type of information they seek. They say that the writers copied each other. Many want to downgrade the Bible believing it is not the inspired Word of God. We are not troubled by that, and if certain verses are repeated twice in our Bible, it has an added significance. As previously mentioned the Book of Genesis had various writers and where the one writer finished; the next writer continued by quoting the previous writer’s closing words, whether they are the same or slightly different.

When Noah continued to write in the Book of Genesis where Adam finished, his opening words were ‘When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.’ Gen. 5:1b Clearly they are the words of Adam but Noah recited them. That is the general structure of the Book of Genesis as they had no page number to determine where the previous writer closed, or where the next writer continued his writing. Therefore I believe that is the reason why some verses are repeated more than once. The Book of Genesis was not written by Moses, but it was entrusted to him.

The Book of Joshua ends with his death and obviously the last few verses were not written by him. He was 110 years old, and that is confirmed in Judges 2. The Book of Genesis ends with Joseph being placed in a coffin, and he was 110 years old. Strangely that is also mentioned twice. Therefore the Book of Genesis and Joshua have something in common as they both end with a burial. Joshua is via Ephraim the firstborn of Joseph, and they belong to the same family.

Whenever we mention the Patriarchs they are usually Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and for many that is where it usually ends. Our Lord Jesus identified Himself many times as the God of the Patriarchs but never as the God of Moses with the law beneath His arms. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth are engendered by our Lord. John 1:17 The promises of

His grace are not firstly mentioned by Abraham, but much earlier by Adam.
If we follow the line of the much talked about firstborn in the Book of Genesis, it did not end with Judah or the Jewish nation. We are aware that our Lord was born from the tribe of Judah, but the promises of God did not end with them or with Judah.
His ultimate promise towards us is fulfilled in Joseph. The line of the firstborn is Jacob - Joseph – Ephraim - Joshua – Jeroboam, and symbolically speaking that line is significant as they are secured in the Church. Our Lord was born not belonging to the house of Joseph or Ephraim, but after Christ's resurrection the aspirations of Joseph were rekindled in the Church. As during the time of Joshua we as the Church have no king on earth to rule over us. As Jeroboam refused to be subjected to the law, we also distance ourselves from the law realising our promises are invested in Christ the author of truth and grace. We who were once condemned as sinners have an exceptional inheritance that ascends above our earthly domain. We are part of both heaven and earth and are deemed as coheirs with Christ. Our future is unimaginable and far greater than any person living during the Old Testament time. We as part of heaven will rule the earth. Now many Christians expect to only live on our earth, believing that heaven is beyond their reach.
The promises of the Church are linked with the promises He once made to Joseph. That is the utmost blessing anyone can receive. Our world is totally unaware of our blessings, and upon Christ's return to earth they will be mesmerised by them.
.

When Christ made Himself known to His brethren upon the day of His resurrection, we may ask who they were.
Firstly, our Lord made Himself known to Mary Magdalene in the garden belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. She was the harlot with the seven unclean spirits who depicted the sad milieu of the ten lost tribes.
Secondly, He made Himself known to the two men on the way to Emmaus, who were known by one name. The two men clearly convey our dispensation, and often we find the two mentioned. They are the two men who met Abraham when he wanted to offer Isaac; the two men of John the Baptist who followed our Lord; the two men on the mount of His glorification; and the two men clothed in white clothes at the Mount of Olives with His ascension. They are all unmistakably a type of the Church with its firstborn right. The two men on the way to Emmaus had their eyes opened when Christ revealed the Scriptures to them.
Afterwards, He made Himself known to the eleven disciples, as Judas was not there. It is uncertain how many disciples were gathered when He made Himself known on the day of His resurrection, but officially there were eleven. The number eleven is also significant, as Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob. There were twelve sons of Jacob, but later Joseph's own son Ephraim became the thirteenth. He received the firstborn right even though he was not one of the twelve. The line is via the eleventh and then the thirteenth. We may argue it is mere coincidence, but that is not

true. In Acts 1, we have a similar setup, as there were eleven disciples and they needed another disciple to replace Judas. In that chapter, they had two candidates: one was called Matthias and the other Joseph. In the end, they chose Matthias and not Joseph. Here, Joseph as the thirteenth appears for a short time only to disappear. In the Bible, Joseph usually appears for a short time only to disappear later, as with Joseph of Nazareth, who was the husband of Mary. Since our Lord was twelve years of age, Joseph was never mentioned again. The probable cause is to emphasise that early in our Church history, the truths and blessings of Joseph were known for a short time, but soon afterwards they were forgotten.

‘Look, you mockers, be amazed and die! For I am doing something in your own day, something you would not believe even if someone told you about it.’ Hab. 1:5; Acts 13:41

The Jewish nation did witness God’s incredible work in the family of Joseph, but shortly afterwards they vanished in the Egyptian exile. They had a glimpse of the real firstborn. Similarly, the early Christians also forgot this simple truth, as it is kept secret until today.

Both Joseph and Joshua were 110 years old, and once more this highlights the importance of the number eleven in their lives. This number is frequently mentioned in the Bible, and I will name a few:

- In a dream of Joseph, the sun, moon, and the eleven stars bowed down before him;
- It took Israel eleven days to travel from Horeb to Mount Seir;
- There were eleven curtains in the tabernacle;
- There is a complicated history in Judges 16 and 17 that started with 110 pieces of silver that disturbed the history of Samson, and it epitomises our dispensation;
- The number eleven portrays the promises of God as achieved via the line of Joseph. Via Joseph, Israel went to live in Egypt, and via Joshua (the son of Joseph) they were brought back into the Promised Land. The words Joshua and Jesus are one and the same. Our dispensation commenced with the thought that the Lord Jesus (Joshua) was born to be known as the son of Joseph, and He ventured to take us to our inheritance in heaven.

‘After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the “servant” of the Lord, died, being 110 years old. ’

It is strange that Joshua is named a servant of the Lord only after his death. Oddly, his death seemed to have made him a servant, and the same title is given to Moses after his death.

- The Book of Joshua commences with Moses being the servant of the Lord, and it ends with Joshua having the same title. At the end of the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses died, and then only is he mentioned as a servant of the Lord (Deut. 34:5).
- We also read of David being the servant of the Lord, but I believe he reflected our Lord, of whom David wrote in his Psalms (Ps. 18:1 & 36:1). We ought to be aware that David speaks of Christ (Acts 2:25), as known by the many Psalms quoted in the New Testament. Throughout the history of David, he is never named as the servant

of the Lord, but it rightfully belongs to the ‘Son of David’ or the risen Christ.

- The prophet Isaiah mentioned the servant eighteen times (Isa. 41:4–53:11), and today the Jews rightfully claim themselves to be His servant. This was true until the time of the New Testament, for since then the title is given to the risen Christ. Early in the Church’s history, an Ethiopian eunuch visited Jerusalem and enquired of Philip who the “servant” was when he referred to the passage in the Book of Isaiah. Was he a prophet or some other man? Philip assured him he was the risen Christ (Acts 8:26–40). Moses and then Joshua were called servants upon their death, and similarly the Lord Jesus after dying on the cross. Upon His resurrection, He inherited this title.

Many Scriptures in the Bible remained unclear before our Lord’s resurrection, but since then they were illuminated to us, as to the two men on the way to Emmaus. Both Moses and Joshua epitomise Christ, as Moses was a prophet and he established the old covenant amongst Israel. Through our Lord Jesus—or Jehoshua—Christ became the author of the new covenant.

‘And you shall carry my bones up from here. So Joseph died at the age of 110 years, and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.’ Gen. 50:25–26The last thirteen chapters of the Book of Genesis highlight the history of Joseph. The coffin of Joseph was carried with Israel throughout the wilderness, only to be buried at the same time as Joshua. Both were buried in close proximity to each other. The idea is that the history of Joseph is reflected in the life and history of Joshua, as both of them highlight our dispensation.

‘Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for 100 pieces of silver; and they became the inheritance of Joseph’s sons.’ Josh. 24:32

As previously mentioned, Shechem was an important city and the hub of Israel, being the first mentioned city in Israel (Gen. 12). During the life of Joseph, a piece of ground was specially allotted to him as his burial place. The land was bought by Jacob, and he had to defend it with his sword. He bought the land and continually defended it after being reconciled with Esau. Our Lord also visited the area frequently, and once He was at Sychar (John 4) or Shechem. Our Lord sat at the fountain in the proximity of the burial place of Joseph. It is the first place where Abraham settled in the land, and also the place where Jacob rested after he reconciled himself with Esau. They both came to an agreement.

When Jacob died, he specially allotted the land to Joseph, and this is where he wished to be buried. It is the nucleus of those who are the real firstborn, and it is the place where Joseph is hidden or buried. Shechem clearly illustrates our dispensation of God’s mystery. Under the oak of Shechem, Jacob buried the gods he brought with him from Laban. To bury things is to hide them.

The Jewish nation had no interest in Samaria or where the 10 lost tribes settled themselves. Unlike them, our Lord frequented the area regularly and was known to visit the well of Jacob. There He portrayed Himself as

the source of life. Since His resurrection, everlasting life has emanated from Him, like a spring of water flowing from the abyss or death. Throughout the history of the Patriarchs, we will discover that their history revolved around the many wells that were usually plugged by their enemies. Despite this hindrance, they were unearthed again to allow the free flow of God's eternal promises. At this well, the Samaritans acknowledged their Messiah, but strangely afterwards the woman disappeared and is never mentioned again. Similarly, early in our church's history, the truths concerning the 10 lost tribes were known as they responded eagerly to Christ's message, but soon afterwards they were forgotten. The woman was instrumental in them accepting Christ, but once the people did accept our Lord, she was soon forgotten.

'Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him, and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. "' (John 4:42)

Many may sneer at this, but certainly I believe there is a reason for the elaborate details in John 4. There is a line of heritage from Abraham to Joseph, Joshua, Jeroboam, the 10 tribes and then the Samaritans. Our Lord visited the Samaritans frequently, especially when He felt dejected. That line kindled a promise to Him via the Church today, for since the Jewish nation refused Him, He was nonetheless accepted by the 10 lost tribes.

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

Since the Jewish nation or Judea refused Him, the Gospel did reach Samaria and then the utmost parts of the world.

They buried Joshua at Timnath Serah, which is in the mountains of Ephraim. The word Timnath Serah means 'an extra or an abundant share', as he was buried as the firstborn. As the firstborn, he had a double (abundant) blessing. Now we as the Church are blessed with immeasurable riches in Christ, and that will be revealed to the world who will stand in awe (Phil. 2:7).

Our Lord went often to the mountains as they communicate the heavens. On the mount, our Lord was glorified when He was seen with both Moses and Elijah (Mark 9). The city was in the north, and that is where the throne of God is seated.

When Satan wished to vacate God's throne, he wished to sit in the far north (Isa. 14:13). In the northern hemisphere, we have the northern crown or Corona Borealis. In the southern hemisphere, we have the Southern Cross (Crux Australis) depicting the humiliation of the cross.

The mountain where Joshua was buried was on the north side of the hill of Gaash (Josh. 24:30). The word Gaash is given to the mountain, meaning that it can quake. The word can also mean 'to toss' or 'to reel to and fro', causing a stir in events. The recurrent message of the Book of Genesis is the continuous changes or the stir of events because the firstborn constantly changed.

In principle, from the two that had to be chosen, the first was abandoned in preference to the second:

- It was not Ishmael but rather Isaac;

- Jacob at the expense of Esau;
- Joseph at the expense of Judah;
- Ephraim instead of Manasseh;
- the 10 tribes instead of the 2 tribes.

It causes a constant stir, and even for Christians to recognise that the chosen nation is not Judah, the tribe from which our Lord Jesus was born as the successor of the throne, but Joseph, is mind-bending. Judah was not chosen but instead the 10 lost tribes in Samaria. Mysteriously, the immeasurable riches in Christ did go to the heathen people, and via Ephraim we are all blessed as the real firstborn.

‘Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.’ (Josh. 24:31)

This verse is a clear picture of the Church today. The people did acknowledge the Lord initially, and Joshua steered them, but once he died, the people continued serving the Lord under the vigilant eyes of the elders. Joshua’s death portrays our Lord’s death, and the Church today is steered by the overseeing eyes of the elders who are part of the flock. The elders are called as such as they are familiar with the work Christ did for us. If any Christians today are unfamiliar with His work, they cannot be known as His elders in the Church.

The bones of Joseph were buried, and they are the backbone concerning the truths of our dispensation. Our bones contour our bodies, and they strengthen them. They structure us, and they take the longest to decay. To Ezekiel was asked if the bones could become alive again. They did (Ezek. 37), and similarly the bones of Joseph are alive today in the Church. The promises endowed to Joseph are realised in us. Today the importance of Joseph is forgotten, and in general Christians have forgotten the importance Joseph had in the shaping of our Church. They may sneer at the importance of Joseph, but to God it is crucial. He is faithful, and He did fulfil His promises in Joseph as previously promised.

In the dream of Joseph, Judah did kneel before him, and not Joseph before Judah. God will fulfil His promises on the quiet, and the world, including the Jewish nations, is ignorant of this.

The easiest and most vital thing to remember is that God did bless us due to our faith in the living Christ, and we are part of the promises of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Despite that, we can trace the roots of His promises as it involved the firstborn, namely Joseph, but he disappeared! It is Joseph’s trait to appear and then suddenly vanish. That is especially true of those named in the New Testament as Joseph the husband of Mary and the so-called 13th disciple, as he is never mentioned again, and also Joseph of Arimathea.

Many questions may surface. If, in future, our Lord appears as the Firstborn on earth, He will be there as part of the tribe of Judah. It is reasonable to ask what the significance of Joseph is after all, if all of God’s promises were wrapped up in the tribe of Judah? What will happen to the promises God once made to the firstborn? With great rhetoric, the firstborn right is continually changed in the Book of Genesis, and what is the meaning of all this? Early in the Church’s history, Judah did fail to

acknowledge our Lord, but those who accepted Him became part of the Church and they are the real firstborn and partakers of both heaven and earth. Amongst the Gentiles, the first to be partakers of the Church are the 10 tribes. If the salvation is taken away from the 2 tribes, it is instead given to the 10 lost tribes.

Previously it seemed the ten tribes of Israel were hopelessly lost amongst the heathen countries, but they did surface again. There is a strong argument, and by no means can we discount the promises God made to Joseph. If they had no value, why is the line of successors documented in the Book of Genesis? Did all their goals end in the Assyrian captivity? Now Judah is forgotten, but the 10 lost tribes did surface mysteriously. But after the rapture of the Church, the promises of the new covenant will entail Judah.

Jacob bought the land for 100 pieces of silver. The letter 10 depicts the Word of God, and 100 the fulfilment of His Word. An example is the 100 sheep belonging to the fold as written in one of our Lord's parables. They anxiously searched for the one lost sheep to enter His Kingdom. When Abraham was 100 years old, Isaac was born, as via the 100 we can also enter His promises.

'For 100 pieces of silver, he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the plot of ground where he pitched his tent.' (Gen. 33:19)

The following chapter in the Book of Genesis (34) also involves Shechem, and I wish to unfold this history. The men of Shechem had an affair with Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. She is also seen as the 13th, and via her doing the men of Shechem agreed to circumcise themselves. Being physically mutilated, they were killed by Jacob's sons. I believe that via their circumcision they did yield themselves to the God of Israel, and they were saved. They exchanged their old life for the new. That is similar to us with our rebirth, and we too are Gentiles.

The last verse of the Book of Genesis says that they put the bones of Joseph in a coffin (Gen. 50:26), and this is the same word used for the Ark of the Covenant. When Israel journeyed through the wilderness, they had two arks to carry: the one was the Ark of the Covenant and the other the coffin (ark) of Joseph (Exod. 13:19). In the one was placed the two tablets of stone and in the other the bones of Joseph. Via his bones, the old promises will surface once more. Both of them portray Christ as He is the fulfilment of all the promises. The difference between them is that they forgot the bones of Joseph and its promises, but they were familiar with the Ark of the Covenant.

'And Eleazar son of Aaron died and was buried at Gibeah, which had been allotted to his son Phinehas.' (Josh. 24:33)

Aaron was the first high priest that died on Mount Hor, and Eleazar his son was the second high priest. Joshua was the follower of Moses, and Eleazar of Aaron. Eleazar was from the tribe of Levi, and I mentioned previously that the Levites had no heritage except for the cities of refuge. According to Scripture, they were not allowed to bury anyone within the walls of any of their cities. Thus, here Eleazar was buried in the mountains of Ephraim, and in this chapter the three men were buried very close to each other.

Early in the history of the Bible, the duties of the priest were given to the

firstborn of the family. Previously, the king was also endowed with the duties of a priest. Melchizedek is an example, as he was both King and High Priest. In Israel, we have a concession as the two duties are divided amongst Jacob’s sons. To Judah was endowed the kingship, and to Levi the priestly function.
Joseph or Ephraim was given the duties of the firstborn.
We may argue what is the importance of the firstborn if both the duties of the priest and king were taken away from him? That will be resolved as later the three duties are united under the one Name of Christ. Christ is both our King from the tribe of Judah, and also our High Priest. He did not inherit it as part of the tribe of Levi but rather He received it from Melchizedek, and He is deemed to be Christ. That is detailed lengthily in the Book of Hebrews. Christ is our Firstborn and He rules both heaven and earth.
Via the symbolism, the aspirations of all three men (Joshua, Joseph and Eleazar) will be revitalised in Christ, and we will share in their blessings.